

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

August 13, 2025

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Secretary
Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

On August 8, 2025, a gunman opened fire on the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), killing DeKalb County Police Officer David Rose and leaving public health workers at the CDC and around the nation fearing for their safety after years of increasing threats following the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ While the investigation is ongoing, early reports suggest that the gunman, who fired nearly 500 rounds during the attack, was motivated by his misinformation-fueled belief that his depression and suicidality were caused by the COVID-19 vaccine.²

Just hours before a police officer was brutally murdered and CDC headquarters would be scarred with bullets, forcing hundreds employees into lockdown, Dr. Robert Malone, whom you recently appointed to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), uploaded a post to his personal blog that included an image of a revolver loaded with a single bullet and the words "Five out of six scientists have proven that Russian roulette is harmless."³ Less than 48 hours after the attack, Dr. Malone issued a meme-filled post that included violent and threatening images that appeared to be directed at government officials, writing, "if you need a disarmed society to govern, you suck at governing."⁴

¹ *CDC shooter believed Covid vaccine made him suicidal, his father tells police*, ASSOCIATED PRESS (Aug. 10, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/cdc-suspect-identified-georgia-officer-dead-2f8eba270597221e23d354164d5dbc0f>; *see also, e.g., Salvador Rizzo, Local health officials report threats, vandalism and harassment during the pandemic, study finds*, WASH. POST (Mar. 17, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2022/03/17/public-health-official-harassment/>.

² Chris Youd et al, *Gunman in CDC shooting fired nearly 500 shots after breaking into his father's gun safe. Here's what we know*, CNN (Aug. 12, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/08/12/us/cdc-atlanta-shooting-shots-windows>.

³ Robert Malone, *Friday Funnies: DEI Is Not Going Well...*, MALONE NEWS (Aug. 8, 2025), <https://www.malone.news/p/friday-funnies-dei-is-not-going-well>. Source code from this post indicates that it was uploaded August 8 at 10:40 a.m. Eastern Time, approximately six hours before the shooting at CDC headquarters. The image is included as Attachment A to this letter.

⁴ Robert Malone, *Sunday Strip: If You Are Going to Think...*, MALONE NEWS (Aug. 10, 2025), <https://www.malone.news/p/sunday-strip-if-you-are-going-to>. The images are included as Attachment B to this letter.

Dr. Malone has displayed an unfathomable failure of judgment and heartlessness for the family of slain Officer Rose, and for the thousands of CDC staff on whom the work of ACIP depends. Dr. Malone's escalating and violent rhetoric—including in the aftermath of this tragic incident—has no place on a panel responsible for determining immunization recommendations for children and adults throughout our country. I therefore call on you to immediately fire Dr. Malone from his role on ACIP.

The shooting of a police officer in the line of duty is not only a criminal act—it is an assault on the stability and safety of our communities. Law enforcement officers and public health officials already face serious risks in their work protecting the public. Those risks are heightened by ideologically motivated attacks, which send a chilling message about the normalization of violence in public discourse. A federal agency must absolutely avoid even the appearance of legitimating such statements by keeping in a position of power someone who makes them.⁵

Last week's profound tragedy shows the harms that result from replacing science with zealotry – not only the increased risk of disease, but also ideologically motivated violence. Appointing Dr. Malone and retaining him in this role would seem to legitimate incendiary rhetoric and dangerous misinformation.

Your response must begin with the immediate firing of Dr. Malone, but should rightly include restoring the entire ACIP panel that existed before it was decimated last June. At that time, you replaced 17 sitting members, whose qualifications and expertise were unchallengeable, with conspiracy theorists and purveyors of misinformation. In an op-ed in the *Wall Street Journal* about these firings, you lamented that, without your actions, “the current Trump administration would not have been able to appoint a majority of new members until 2028.”⁶ Your comment shows how thoroughly the Trump Administration has confused independent scientific guidance with its own whims, and betrays a fundamental ignorance of ACIP's role as an apolitical panel with members appointed by multiple Presidents for overlapping terms. Indeed, for most of the Biden Administration, a majority of ACIP members were appointed during the first Trump Administration.⁷ As the 17 members you fired noted in an article published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, ACIP's commitment to transparency and scientific independence have historically made “the decisions and deliberations of this committee a beacon for immunization programs globally.”⁸ Unfortunately, because of your actions, its credibility has been shredded.

⁵ In previous posts, Malone has suggested that a “Deep State” bent on imposing “mass psychosis” may be beyond defeat at “the ballot box,” and that he would be stockpiling “guns, ammo, farm infrastructure” to “ride out the following storm.” Robert Malone, *PsyWar and Washington DC's Bureaucracy*, MALONE NEWS (Nov. 7, 2023), <https://www.malone.news/p/psywar-and-washington-dcs-bureaucracy>.

⁶ Robert F. Kennedy Jr., *RFK Jr.: HHS Moves to Restore Public Trust in Vaccines*, WALL ST. J. (June 9, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/opinion/rfk-jr-hhs-moves-to-restore-public-trust-in-vaccines-45495112>.

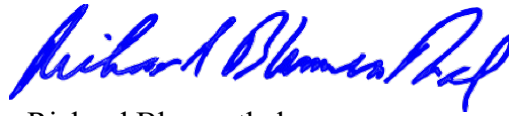
⁷ U.S. CTRS. FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION, ACIP Members August 2021 – June 2023, <https://archive.cdc.gov/#/details?url=https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/committee/members-archive/members-2021-aug-2023-jun.html>.

⁸ Edwin Asturias et al, *Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices at a Crossroads*, JAMA (June 16, 2025), <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2835626>.

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I sincerely hope that last week's attack will demonstrate to you what should have been obvious from the beginning: Dr. Malone has no business being on ACIP, and the firings you ordered to put him there should never have occurred.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Richard Blumenthal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Blumenthal" clearly legible.

Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman

Enclosure

Attachment A



**Five out of six scientists
have proven that
Russian roulette
is harmless**

Attachment B



"You don't need 30 rounds to hunt."



**Correct, but the 2nd Amendment
was not written in case the deer
turn against us.**

**If you need 30
rounds to hunt,
you suck at hunting.**



**If you need a disarmed
society to govern,
you suck at governing.**

