



Florida Chapter of the
American Academy of Pediatrics
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Videos: Florida Pediatricians Speak Out Against Bill to Weaken Vaccine Protections and Endanger Florida's Children

Tallahassee, Florida – The Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (FCAAP) is disappointed to see the Florida Senate Rules Committee pass SB 1756, a bill that would significantly weaken Florida's school vaccination policies and make it easier to opt out of childhood immunizations, and urges Senators to oppose its further progress.

Pediatricians warn that the bill poses serious risks to Florida's children – particularly infants and immunocompromised children who depend on community vaccination rates to stay safe.

“The children most at risk are those who never had a choice: infants too young to be fully vaccinated and children who cannot receive vaccines because they are undergoing immunosuppressive treatment,” said FCAAP President Dr. Rana Alissa. “These children depend on the people around them being vaccinated. When vaccination rates fall, these are the children who end up in my hospital in need of urgent care. These children cannot advocate for themselves. I am asking you to do it for them. Please vote no on this bill.”

“If you pass this bill, you are siding with a tiny minority over the will of the majority of your constituents,” said FCAAP Vice President Dr. Jennifer Takagishi. “You're playing politics with people's lives. Let your and your voters' consciences be your guide. Vote no on SB 1756.”

Florida is already in a precarious public health moment. Since the start of 2026, the state has recorded more than 100 measles cases. And for the most recent school year, vaccination rates among kindergarteners have dropped to 88-89%, well below the 95% threshold needed to maintain community immunity. SB 1756 would accelerate that decline by eliminating medical oversight of the exemption process and adding a no-strings-attached, conscience-based exemption to school vaccine requirements.

“We have pushed these devastating diseases to the margins through vaccines and through Florida's longstanding school entry requirements, but they will return if we allow these protections to erode,” said FCAAP member Dr. Sarah Marsicek. “This bill makes it easier to opt out of vaccinating children by removing medical oversight and safeguards, putting our children at risk.”

“Vaccines changed the face of American medicine. They have held these diseases at bay. But that progress is fragile. When immunization rates drop, the diseases return – we are seeing it now,” said Dr. Paul Robinson, a past president of FCAAP. “I have stood at those bedsides; please, do not pass a law that invites these tragedies back. I urge you to vote no.”

Video testimony from the physicians quoted above is available at <https://www.fcaap.org/go/March3Statements>.

About the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics:

Through its more than 2,900 members, the Florida Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics promotes the health and welfare of Florida's children and supports pediatricians and pediatric specialists as the best qualified providers of their health care.

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