

## United States Senate

September 5, 2025

Alison Galvani  
Center Director  
Center for Infectious Disease Modeling and Analysis  
Yale School of Public Health  
60 College Street  
New Haven, CT 06520

Dear Director Galvani,

On August 5, 2025, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced that it would cease investment in messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine research and development. The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) subsequently cancelled 22 contracts totaling more than \$500 million in research and development for the mRNA vaccine platform. I am deeply concerned about the impacts of the Secretary's decision to cease mRNA research, especially for Americans of all ages who live with cancer and other diseases that could soon be treated or even cured with mRNA.

The mRNA vaccine platform is one of the most powerful new medical technologies to be discovered and used in the last decade. While most vaccines use deactivated germs to produce an immune response, mRNA vaccines carry instructions to our cells on how to fight a given disease. This makes mRNA an invaluable tool that can be quickly and effectively adapted to target a range of pathogens and conditions. After President Trump's Operation Warp Speed led to the development of the lifesaving COVID-19 vaccines, researchers have discovered the potential for mRNA to protect against a range of diseases.

In particular, recent clinical advancements have shown tremendous potential for mRNA to revolutionize cancer treatment and prevention. Clinical trials are demonstrating that mRNA vaccines, especially when combined with existing therapies, can reduce relapse rates and improve outcomes for patients. Researchers across the country are now exploring the potential for mRNA technology to treat a variety of challenging cancers including melanoma, brain, pancreatic, and lung cancers, among others.

If HHS follows through on its plan to fully divest from the mRNA vaccine platform, Americans will lose out on cures for deadly diseases that are otherwise within our reach. Given the proven therapeutic potential of mRNA vaccines, divesting from mRNA will likely mean that more Americans will needlessly fall sick or lose their lives in the coming years. Furthermore, without sustained investment in the mRNA vaccine platform, Americans will lose critical protection from future biological attacks and pandemics.

To help us better understand the impacts of the Administration's divestment from mRNA vaccine development, we are interested in the Center's analysis of the financial and human costs of the United States abandoning this platform. Please respond to the following questions in writing by September 30, 2025:

1. Based on data from clinical trials, for which cancers could the United States have mRNA vaccines or immunotherapy treatments available in the near future?
2. In the coming years, approximately how many lives could be saved in the United States using mRNA vaccines and immunotherapies?
3. What would be the economic cost to the United States (in dollar terms) of ceasing government investment in the mRNA platform?
4. How many deaths have been prevented in the United States as a result of immunizations with the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines? What public health benefits might we see if similar mRNA vaccines are developed for other infectious diseases?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maggie Hassan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator