

Public Health Groups Urge Court to Protect Access to Evidence-Based, Lifesaving Vaccines

Individuals who are immunocompromised rely heavily on broad community vaccination to safely participate in daily life activities.

July 17, 2026 By American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) led an amicus (or friend-of-the-court) brief on behalf of key national public health groups in support of plaintiffs in the American Academy of Pediatrics v. Kennedy lawsuit. This case is pending at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and challenges changes to the membership of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) arguing that vaccine recommendations made by that body subsequently lack clear scientific basis and negatively impact disease prevention and survivorship.

Amici are organizations dedicated to supporting patients and their families across the United States and collectively represent millions of individuals who have various medical conditions and rely on vaccines for protection, treatment and/or prevention. Individuals who are immunocompromised and especially vulnerable to infectious and vaccine-preventable diseases rely heavily on broad community vaccination to safely participate in daily life activities such as attending school, working outside the home and seeking medical care.

Below are excerpts from the [amicus brief](#) highlighting the groups' concerns and urging the court to side with the plaintiffs:

“Vaccinations play a critical role in promoting public health, preventing serious illnesses and protecting millions of people with serious conditions that compromise their immune systems or otherwise put them at heightened risk for severe illness from vaccine-preventable diseases. Amici have strong and continuing interests in protecting access to and development of vaccines that are proven to be safe and effective, and therefore profound interest in maintaining the institutional integrity of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and ensuring that its membership complies with applicable legal standards.

“Given the implications of ACIP decisions for public health, it is critical that its recommendations be evidence-based, grounded in the latest science and informed by the professional expertise and

experience of its members. ACIP's governing statutes, regulations and charter require as much. The recent termination and replacement of ACIP's membership, and ACIP's subsequent changes to its vaccine recommendations, represent a radical departure from those requirements and risk reducing access to and undermining confidence in vaccines. The public health consequences of these actions are grave. People with cancer and other life-altering conditions face heightened risks as community protection erodes and access to promising vaccine treatments is delayed.

"ACIP's changes to vaccine recommendations have a sweeping impact on American public health generally and on the health of patients with cancer and other chronic conditions in particular. Any changes must therefore be well-considered, evidence-based and made by qualified experts in the field. The Department of Health and Human Services cannot ignore the ACIP membership criteria established by statute, regulation and the ACIP charter."

The following organizations have signed onto the brief and are represented by ANDERSON & KREIGER LLP in the filing:

- American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)
- American Cancer Society (ACS)
- AiArthritis
- American Lung Association
- American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
- Arthritis Foundation
- Association of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Nurses (APHON)
- Blood Cancer United
- Byrd Cancer Education and Advocacy Foundation
- Cancer Nation
- CancerCare
- Cervivor, Inc.
- GO2 for Lung Cancer
- HealthyWomen
- Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association
- ITAVFoundation
- LUNGeivity Foundation
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ("NAACP")

- National Comprehensive Cancer Network
- National Consumers League
- National Multiple Sclerosis Society
- National Patient Advocate Foundation
- Pro-Vaccine Legal Alliance (PVLA) at American Families for Vaccines (AFV)
- The AIDS Institute

[This press release](#) was originally published July 17, 2026, by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network.

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