



North Carolina General Assembly
House of Representatives
State Legislative Building
Raleigh 27601-1096

August 5, 2021

Eugene A. Woods
President and CEO
Atrium Health
1000 Blythe Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28203

Julie Ann Freischlag, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Wake Forest Baptist Health
Medical Center Boulevard
Winston-Salem, NC 27157

Mary Jo Cagle, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Cone Health
1200 North Elm Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Wesley Burks, MD
Chief Executive Officer
UNC Health
101 Manning Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 275

A. Eugene Washington
President and CEO
Duke University Health System
2301 Erwin Road
Durham, NC 27710

Michael Waldrum, MD
Chief Executive Officer
Vidant Health
800 WH Smith Blvd
Greenville, NC 27835

Carl S. Armato
President and CEO
Novant Health
2085 Frontis Plaza Boulevard
Winston-Salem, NC 27103

Donald R Gintzig
President and CEO
WakeMed Hospitals
3000 New Bern Ave.
Raleigh, NC 27610

Dear Health System Executives,

We are writing in regards to your recent decision to require all hospital staff to receive the COVID-19 vaccination in the coming weeks in order to keep their jobs. We continue to hear from countless constituents who work at your facilities that feel blindsided by this announcement.

Regardless of the legality surrounding mandatory vaccinations, there are valid concerns and fears from healthcare workers who will lose their job if they do not take the vaccine. An issue of particular concern is from women who are pregnant or breastfeeding and those with preexisting conditions or religious objections.



While we recognize the importance of vaccines and respect the rights of private employers, we strongly encourage you to reexamine this requirement with greater input from employees and flexibility for those who have legitimate objections.

From our conversations with constituents who work at these facilities, we feel this was a rushed and hasty decision that does not include feedback and consideration of the employees and staff. These men and women were rightly hailed as healthcare heroes while serving on the frontlines against COVID-19. It is simply unfair to force them to choose between their job and taking a vaccine that is only authorized for "emergency use only" by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

As you know, hospitals across the state are struggling to fill open nursing positions. In fact, Duke Health is seeking to hire around 700 nursing positions and UNC Health is looking for more than 800 nurses. This decision to terminate nurses and other healthcare professionals who do not take the vaccine will only exacerbate the problem. In certain instances, a hospital could potentially lose 30% of its workforce due to vaccine mandates.

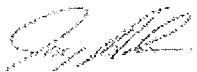
From difficulties in recruitment to a decline in quality of care, there are serious issues that should have been addressed and thought-out before threatening the employment of tens of thousands of healthcare employees.

We believe there is a better path forward that includes more attention, consideration and flexibility surrounding the concerns and uneasiness of your employees, as well as the impact such a mandate will have on recruitment, retention and quality of care.

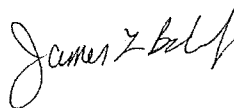
We understand the pandemic is forcing hard decisions for families, communities and businesses across the entire country, particularly in the health care industry. However, we believe the rush by North Carolina's largest health systems to "be first in the state to require COVID vaccination for their employees," is unwise and unfair to the brave healthcare professionals who have sacrificed so much over the past year and a half on the frontlines of the pandemic.

We appreciate your time and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Rep. Jay Adams



Rep. Jamie Boles



Rep. Mike Clappitt



Rep. Dean Arp




Rep. John Bradford



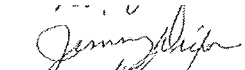
Rep. George Cleveland



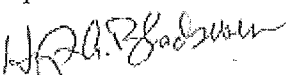
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