May 22, 2024

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Subject: Joint Governors’ Response to Proposed Amendments to the World Health Organization’s International Health Regulations (IHR) and a New Pandemic Treaty

Dear Mr. President,

We, as governors of our respective states, stand united in opposition to two proposed instruments currently under negotiation that would purport to grant the World Health Organization (WHO) unprecedented and unconstitutional powers over the United States and its people. These proposed changes could drastically change the role of governors in response to their charge as the state health officials.

These proposed accords aim to significantly alter the amendments to the WHO’s existing International Health Regulations (IHRs) and introduce a new "Pandemic Agreement" (Treaty) that would undermine national sovereignty, infringe upon states’ rights, and jeopardize constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.

The objective of these instruments is to empower the WHO, particularly its uncontrollable Director-General, with the authority to restrict the rights of U.S. citizens, including freedoms such as speech, privacy, travel, choice of medical care, and informed consent, thus violating our Constitution’s core principles.

If adopted, these agreements would seek to elevate the WHO from an advisory body to a global authority in public health. Under the proposed amendments and treaty, the WHO’s Director-General would supposedly gain unilateral power to declare a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC) in member nations, extending beyond pandemics to include a range of perceived emergencies.
Furthermore, these instruments would erode sovereignty by granting the WHO’s Director-General the authority to dictate responses to a declared PHEIC, stripping elected representatives of their role in setting public health policies and compelling citizens to comply with WHO directives, potentially including mandates regarding medical treatments.

Additional concerns arise regarding the establishment of a global surveillance infrastructure and requirements for member states to censor speech related to public health, potentially facilitating the proliferation of biological weapons.

As governors, we affirm that public health policy is a matter reserved for the states, not the federal government, and certainly not international bodies like the WHO. We are committed to resisting any attempts to transfer authority to the WHO over public policy affecting our citizens or any efforts by the WHO to assert such authority over them.

Sincerely,

Governor Kay Ivey
State of Alabama

Governor Mike Dunleavy
State of Alaska

Governor Sarah Sanders
State of Arkansas

Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida

Governor Brian Kemp
State of Georgia

Governor Brad Little
State of Idaho

Governor Eric Holcomb
State of Indiana

Governor Kim Reynolds
State of Iowa

Governor Jeff Landry
State of Louisiana

Governor Tate Reeves
State of Mississippi

Governor Greg Gianforte
State of Montana

Governor Jim Pillen
State of Nebraska
Governor Joe Lombardo  
State of Nevada

Governor Chris Sununu  
State of New Hampshire

Governor Doug Burgum  
State of North Dakota

Governor Kevin Stitt  
State of Oklahoma

Governor Henry McMaster  
State of South Carolina

Governor Kristi Noem  
State of South Dakota

Governor Bill Lee  
State of Tennessee

Governor Greg Abbott  
State of Texas

Governor Spencer Cox  
State of Utah

Governor Glenn Youngkin  
Commonwealth of Virginia

Governor Jim Justice  
State of West Virginia

Governor Mark Gordon  
State of Wyoming