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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Call to Prioritize Evidence and Science When Considering Cabinet Appointees

MONTPELIER, VT (NOV. 26, 2024) - The importance of confirming qualified experts to positions that provide oversight of the nation’s most important health care-related agencies cannot be overstated. We must utilize established science and champion medical and scientific advancement, refute disproven and dangerous conspiracy theories, and stop the spread of misinformation.

The Vermont Medical Society, American Academy of Pediatrics Vermont Chapter, American College of Physicians Vermont Chapter, Vermont Academy of Family Physicians, Vermont Ophthalmological Society, Vermont Psychiatric Association, Vermont Society of Anesthesiologists have a singular goal of improving the health and wellbeing of all patients. Using our collective voice we urge that all appointees support the basic tenets of humanity, backed by decades of science including: ensuring a robust evidence-based public health system;ⁱ universal access to comprehensive, affordable, high-quality health care including through the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid and traditional Medicare;ⁱⁱ humane treatment of migrants – opposing separation of children from their caregivers or families;ⁱⁱⁱ protection of reproductive rights, including contraception and safe legal abortions;^{iv} LGBTQ+ rights and gender affirming healthcare;^{v;vi} access to vaccines, one of the safest and most cost-effective way to protect children, families and communities from disease, disability and death;^{vii} and combating bias based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, age or other demographic characteristics.^{viii} These guiding principles are our north star and are the standard by which we will evaluate nominees.

We urge the United States Senate to thoroughly vet any potential candidate for confirmation by these standards, ensure that evidence-based science continues to underpin all decision-making and policies, and consider both the short- and long-term effects of a decision that could have life and death consequences. Our nation's health and well-being depend on it.

Vermonters wanting to weigh in on the appointments, should contact Senator Sanders at: <https://www.sanders.senate.gov/contact/contact-form/> and Welch at: <https://www.welch.senate.gov/email-peter/#email-peter>.

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ⁱ https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/2020%20Support%20of%20a%20Robust%20Public%20Health%20System.pdf

ⁱⁱ https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/2020%20Single-payer%20National%20Health%20Program_Final.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/vms_resolutions/2019%20Support%20Humane%20Treatment%20of%20Migrants_Final.pdf

^{iv} https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/vms_resolutions/2019%20Codifying%20Protection%20for%20Womens%20Reproductive%20Rights_Final.pdf

^v <https://vermontbiz.com/news/2021/april/16/medical-leaders-call-scott-and-lawmakers-denounce-restrictions-gender-care>

^{vi} https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/2022%20Cross%20State%20Health%20Care%20Services.pdf

^{vii} https://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/aap/2024/aap-statement-on-robert-f.-kennedy-jr.-nomination-to-lead-u.s.-department-of-health-and-human-services?fbclid=IwY2xjawGscgNleHRuA2FlbQlxMAABHXa8z9O3plk9hxNdt-H7QsA_DhrL_ipainCP220_4Ch5Th54rT93MRiw2A_aem_v0YcBXZKlHz_mjFw9vuoWg

^{viii} https://vtmd.org/client_media/files/vms_resolutions/2018%20Implicit%20Bias_0.pdf