

## **Influenza Vaccine: Why Mandates Are Ineffective & Unwise Public Policy**

- Influenza rarely kills healthy people under age 65 and natural immunity PROTECTS younger people during future influenza outbreaks;<sup>1</sup>
- 80 percent of all flu-like illness reported during the “flu season” is NOT caused by influenza <sup>2</sup> but by other viruses and bacteria;
- Most influenza studies are poorly designed and have NOT demonstrated influenza vaccine is effective or safe;<sup>3,4</sup>
- Influenza transmission CAN be prevented or reduced in home and health care settings with hand washing, masking, and separating sick and healthy persons.<sup>5,6</sup>
- Like ALL pharmaceutical products, influenza vaccine carries health risks that can be greater for some than others;<sup>7</sup>
- Surveys reveal that 60-70% of Americans do NOT want to get a flu shot even in pandemic years <sup>8,9</sup> and more than 50% of American parents are concerned about vaccine safety in general.<sup>10</sup>
- Studies reveal that 60% of health care professionals do NOT want to get influenza shots and are concerned about the vaccine’s ineffectiveness and side effects;<sup>11</sup>
- Threatening and forcing Americans to get vaccinated, including firing health care workers who refuse flu shots, <sup>12</sup> WILL further erode public trust in vaccines and public health policies<sup>13,14,15</sup>
- The tax dollars spent to purchase, distribute and enforce use of flu shots WILL guarantee big profits for drug companies but will NOT guarantee a healthier population.<sup>16,17,18</sup>

### **MORE FLU FACTS**

1. Between 5 and 20 percent of Americans may experience type A or type B influenza in an average flu season and the majority have uncomplicated cases and develop immunity to the strains they were infected with that lasts for several years or longer;<sup>19</sup>
2. Out of 308 million Americans, CDC estimates that about 12,000 deaths were associated with influenza in 2009, a pandemic year;<sup>20</sup>
3. Influenza-related deaths usually involve bacterial pneumonia complications, which rarely occur in healthy children and adults;<sup>21</sup>
4. Influenza viruses constantly evolve and, depending upon the year, the flu shot may or may not contain the influenza strains associated with most reported influenza cases.<sup>22</sup>
5. The 2009 pandemic H1N1 “swine flu” vaccine and the 2010/11 seasonal influenza vaccine containing the pandemic H1N1 component have generated increased reports of Guillain Barre syndrome (GBS), Bell’s Palsy, and idiopathic thrombocytopenia purpura (ITP);<sup>23</sup> convulsions<sup>24</sup> and narcolepsy.<sup>24</sup>

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