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February 3, 2025

Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE NO on the nomination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Votes on this issue may be scored in NEA's report card for the 119th Congress.

Perhaps more than any other agency of the U.S. government, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) touches the daily lives of America's children and families in tangible ways. It has more than a dozen divisions that include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA); and Medicaid/CHIP, which cover 38 million children and comprise 47.4 percent of total Medicaid and CHIP enrollment.

Mr. Kennedy has never managed an organization nearly as big and complex as HHS. Nor has he demonstrated the scientific knowledge and literacy the job requires. His previous perspectives on vaccination are deeply troubling, especially their implications for the safety of the school community. While vaccine policy for attending PreK-12 schools is set at the state level, and may vary by community, the Secretary of Health and Human Services oversees the development of hugely influential recommendations. Just a few years ago, in New York City, declining vaccination rates played a key role in the worst measles outbreak in nearly three decades.

As Secretary of Health and Human Services, Mr. Kennedy's use of the bully pulpit could greatly harm America's children and families. We urge you to VOTE NO on his nomination.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association