

LEAD GOVERNOR'S STATIONARY – RGA CHAIR GOVERNOR MICHAEL LEE

[05.13.24]

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

**Re World Health Organization's *International Health Regulations (IHR)* and new
 Pandemic Treaty.**

Dear President,

As Governors of the States below, we write to express our concern for the long-term welfare and sovereignty of our states and country should the World Health Organization pass a proposed Pandemic Treaty or updates to the International Health Regulations.

We are extremely concerned that, at the World Health Assembly's (WHA) scheduled meeting later this month in Geneva, your Presidential delegates intend to support updates to the International Health Regulations (IHR) as well as a proposed Pandemic Treaty that, we believe, would seriously compromise our elected role to make healthcare policy decisions for our states.

The object of these instruments is nothing less than to empower the WHO, and specifically its unelected, unaccountable Director-General, the authority to restrict U.S. citizens' rights, including their freedoms of speech, privacy, and movement, and otherwise violate our Constitution's First, Fourth, Fifth, Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments.

We must, therefore, oppose these accords.

If the two proposed instruments were to be adopted, the WHO would be transformed from an advisory, charitable organization into the world's governor of public health. The WHO is currently limited to an advisory role and has no authority to enforce its recommendations. But, under the proposed IHR amendments and Pandemic Treaty, the WHO's Director-General would achieve the power unilaterally to declare a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC) in one or more member nations. Such declarations can include perceived or potential emergencies other than pandemics, including: climate change, immigration, gun violence or even "emergencies" involving plants, animals, or ecosystems (the ONE HEALTH Proposal).

Furthermore, the proposed IHR amendments and Pandemic Treaty would further surrender our states' sovereignty to the WHO. The WHO's Director-General would be authorized to dictate what must be done in response to such a declared Public Health Emergency of International Concern. America's elected representatives would no longer set the nation's public health policies. And, under the WHO's proposed agreements, American citizens would be obliged to comply with whatever the Director-General directs concerning mitigation of these emergencies. That would include declaring what treatments would be permitted or restricted during a declared public health emergency.

Finally, responsibility for public health policy is not among the federal government's enumerated powers under the U.S. Constitution. It is, by default, reserved to our states, their governors, and their legislatures according to the 10th Amendment. Therefore, we hereby declare the federal government does not have the authority to transfer to the WHO the rights of each of our states, their Governors and their legislatures to manage their own public health policies.

We, the below signed Governors, insist your Administration cease support of the WHO's attempts to infringe upon our sovereign rights to ensure that we, on a state level, have the ability to determine what is best for our people in the case of a public health crisis.

Respectfully,

Governor Bill Lee / TENNESSEE
CHAIR – Republican Gov's Assoc.

Governor Brian Kemp / GEORGIA
VICE-CHAIR – Republican Gov's Assoc.

Governor Kay Ivey / ALABAMA

Governor Mike Dunleavy / ALASKA

Gov. Sara Huckabee Sanders / ARKANSAS

Governor Ron DeSantis / FLORIDA

Governor Brad Little / IDAHO

Governor Eric Holcomb / INDIANA

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Governor Tate Reeves / MISSISSIPPI

Governor Mike Parson / MISSOURI

Governor Greg Gianforte / MONTANA

Governor Jim Pillen / NEBRASKA

Governor Joe Lombardo / NEVADA

Governor Chris Sununu / NEW HAMPSHIRE

Governor Doug Burgum / NORTH DAKOTA

Gov Richard Michael DeWine / OHIO

Governor Kevin Stitt / OKLAHOMA

Gov Henry McMaster / SOUTH CAROLINA

Governor Kristi L Noem / SOUTH DAKOTA

Governor Greg Abbott / TEXAS

Governor Spencer Cox / UTAH

Governor Phil Scott / VERMONT

Governor Glenn Youngkin / VIRGINIA

Governor Jim Justice / WEST VIRGINIA

Governor Mark Gordon / WYOMING