

PROTECT OUR CARE

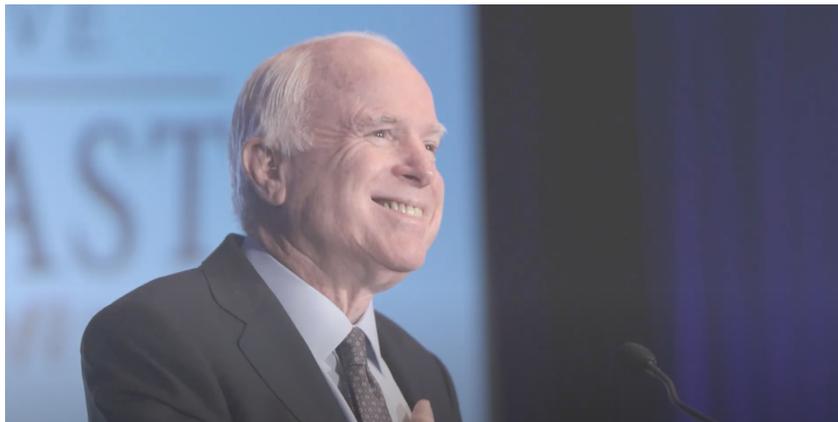
**** Weekly Wrap Up ****

[October 16 - October 22, 2021]



Protect Our Care announced a new television ad highlighting the late U.S. Senator John McCain's (R-AZ) strong support for allowing Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices.

NEW: Arizona TV Ad Features Senator McCain's Remarks Saying "It Makes No Sense" to Ban Medicare From Negotiating Lower Drug Prices



[Watch the Ad Here.](#)

Protect Our Care announced a new television ad highlighting the late U.S. Senator John McCain's (R-AZ) strong support for allowing Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices. The ad urges U.S. Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) to do the right thing and support legislation to end the current ban and give Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices for all Americans.

President Biden and Democrats in Congress are continuing to work to pass Medicare negotiation and other critical health care priorities in the Build Back Better budget legislation. The ad makes clear Senator Sinema must protect patients instead of Big Pharma's profits. The ad will begin running on broadcast TV in Phoenix.

"Senator Sinema has a choice to make: she can either stand up for Arizonans and deliver lower drug prices, or she can stand with the big drug companies," said Protect Our Care Chair Leslie Dach. "Arizonans are fed up with the broken system that forces them to pay three times more for medications than people in other countries. Medicare negotiation is a no-brainer that has long been supported by voters across the political spectrum. Senator McCain fought for what was right for patients, and now Arizonans need Senator Sinema to do the right thing and rein in Big Pharma's greed to bring relief to the American people."

Script (30s):

"Why in the world, if we're interested in lower prices for prescription drugs, would we put a prohibition in that Medicare can't use its market share to negotiate better prices for drug companies? I mean, it makes no sense."

Senator John McCain was right.

It makes no sense that Medicare can't negotiate for lower prices — but Congress can fix that and lower drug prices for Arizona patients.

Call Senator Kyrsten Sinema.

Tell her to follow Senator McCain's lead.

Vote to lower drug prices now.

MEMO: Widespread Support in Key Congressional Districts for Medicare Negotiation to Lower Drug Prices, Other Key Health Provisions, and the Overall Build Back Better Plan

Four new Public Policy Polling surveys conducted among voters in four key Congressional Districts find strong bipartisan support for the key reforms to health care that are part of the Build Back Better plan that will lower drug costs and insurance premiums, expand Medicare benefits, and increase coverage. The districts polled are California's 52nd Congressional District (represented by Scott Peters), Florida's 7th Congressional District (represented by Stephanie Murphy), New Jersey's 5th Congressional District (represented by Josh Gottheimer), and New York's 4th Congressional District (represented by Kathleen Rice).

Overwhelming majorities of voters across party lines in each district support giving Medicare the power to negotiate lower prescription drug prices.

- 81% of CA-52 voters, 80% of FL-07 voters, 78% of NY-04 voters, and 77% of NJ05 voters say they support giving Medicare the power to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans, with a majority in each district saying they strongly support it.
 - This includes support from a majority across party lines, including 86-94% of Democrats, 69-79% of independents and 64-70% of Republicans.
 - An overwhelming majority of voters (87% in FL-7 and NJ-05, 86% in NY04, and 79% in CA-52) say they think the price of prescription drugs is too high, while just 6-11% think they are "about right." 87% of NY-04 voters support making sure that Americans do not pay more for the same prescription drugs than what people pay in other countries, while just 5% oppose it. Those in support include 84% of independents and 83% of Republicans
- An overwhelming majority of voters in each district (90% in NJ-05, 87% in NY-04 and FL-07, and 83% in CA-52) support making sure that Americans do not pay more for the same prescription drugs than what people pay in other countries, while just 4-10% oppose it. Those in support include 84-86% of independents and 71- 90% of Republicans
- Voters reject the drug company argument that giving Medicare the power to negotiate will undermine innovation. A strong majority of voters in each district (77% in CA-52, 75% in FL-07, 74% in NJ-05, and 70% in NY-04) say they agree more that Medicare should be allowed to negotiate with drug companies to make drugs and medication more affordable to patients. Just 9-11% agree more with the drug company argument that by letting Medicare dictate prescription drug prices, drug companies' ability to innovate and develop new drugs will be undercut.

Voters are also supportive of the other benefits the Build Back Better plan would offer for health insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid:

- 70% of CA-52 voters, 65% of NY-04 and FL-07 voters, and 62% of NJ-05 voters support a plan in Congress to lower the health insurance costs for people who buy insurance on their own by expanding tax credits and subsidies. Just 10-16% overall are opposed. Like many of the previous initiatives, this attracts bipartisan support, including 58-72% of Republican voters and 60-66% of independents.

- 85% of FL-7 and NY-04 voters, 84% of CA-52 voters, and 83% of NJ-05 voters support using savings from lower drug prices to provide health care benefits for hearing, dental, and vision to seniors on Medicare, and lower insurance premiums for millions more. Supporters include 72-84% of Republicans and 75-82% of independents.
- 72% of CA-52 voters, 70% of NY-04 voters, 69% of FL-07 voters, and 62% of NJ05 voters support giving low- and moderate-income Americans, including seniors, children, and people who do not get insurance at work, the opportunity to get health insurance at little or no cost if their district does not offer coverage under Medicaid. Just 14-20% are opposed. Supporters include a majority of independents (52-64%) and a plurality to majority of Republicans, depending on the district (43-63%).

A majority of voters in all four districts (72% in CA-52, 70% in NY-04, 65% in FL-07, and 62% in NJ-05) say they support the overall Build Back Better plan, which would provide paid family and medical leave, expand Medicare coverage for seniors including dental, vision, and hearing coverage, and lower health care costs by allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices.

A majority of voters in all four districts (72% in CA-52, 70% in NY-04, 65% in FL-07, and 62% in NJ-05) say they support the overall Build Back Better plan, which would provide paid family and medical leave, expand Medicare coverage for seniors including dental, vision, and hearing coverage, and lower health care costs by allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices.

Public Policy Polling surveyed 516 voters in Florida's 7th Congressional District on behalf of Protect Our Care from October 15-16, 2021. The margin of error is +/- 4.3%. 60% of interviews for the survey were conducted by text message and 40% by telephone.

Public Policy Polling surveyed 658 voters in New Jersey's 5th Congressional District on behalf of Protect Our Care from October 15-17, 2021. The margin of error is +/- 3.8%. 50% of interviews for the survey were conducted by telephone and 50% by text message.

Public Policy Polling surveyed 532 voters in New York 4th Congressional District on behalf of Protect Our Care from October 15-16, 2021. The margin of error is +/- 4.3%. 50% of interviews for the survey were conducted by telephone and 50% by text message.

Protect Our Care Held Nationwide Events Calling On Congress to Pass Build Back Better Health Care Priorities

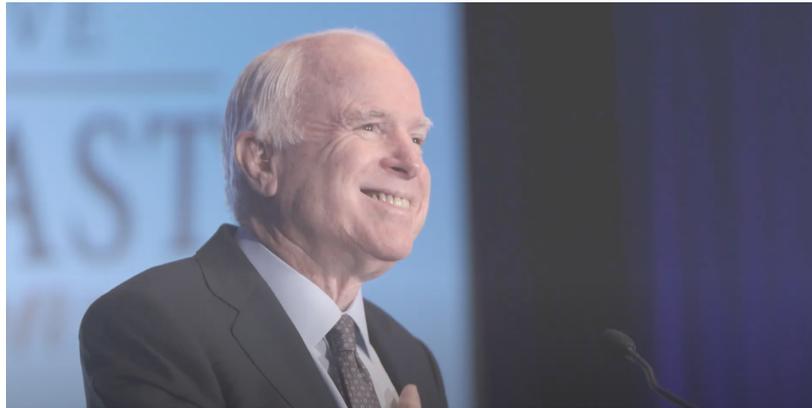
Protect Our Care continued its events and activities calling on members of Congress to pass all of President Biden's health care priorities in the Build Back Better Act. Democrats are

continuing to negotiate a final budget agreement that will give Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices, extend coverage to millions by closing the Medicaid coverage gap, expand Medicare benefits to include vision, dental and hearing, and reduce health care costs for millions of people purchasing coverage on their own. Polling released this week from Public Policy Polling on behalf of Protect Our Care confirms these proposals are overwhelmingly popular among voters in key congressional districts.

Through press events, TV and radio ads, and polling, Protect Our Care continued to convey that President Biden's health care priorities are among the most consequential policies to Americans' health and well-being and remain central to the popularity of the Build Back Better package. Leading up to the final passage of the Build Back Better Act, Protect Our Care will work to ensure lawmakers understand the importance of lowering drug prices and expanding coverage so all Americans have access to quality, affordable health care.

ARIZONA

TV AD: Protect Our Care announced a new television ad highlighting the late U.S. Senator John McCain's (R-AZ) strong support for allowing Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices. The ad urges U.S. Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ) to do the right thing and support legislation to end the current ban and give Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices for all Americans.



[Watch the Ad Here.](#)

COVERAGE:

- Washington Post Health 202: [Vaccine demand could soon surge again in the U.S.](#)
- Brahm Resnik (12 News/KPNX TV) Twitter: [NEW @ProtectOurCare TV ad airing in AZ highlights Sinema 'hero' John McCain's support for letting Medicare negotiate drug](#)

prices. Sinema supported in past, widely reported to be opposing it now. Spox says she hasn't said either way. Ad: <https://bit.ly/3vAS6Br> [[@brahmresnik](#), 10/21/21]

CALIFORNIA

RADIO AD: Protect Our Care released a new radio ad on KOGO-AM and KGB-FM San Diego calling on Representative Scott Peters (D-CA-52) to give Medicare the power to negotiate with drug companies for lower prices for all Americans. In the ad, San Diego nurse Rachel Compton tells the devastating story of her patient who passed away because he couldn't afford the medications he needed to survive.

[Listen to the Radio Ad Here.](#)

NEW POLL: A new Public Policy Polling survey finds strong bipartisan support in California's 52nd Congressional District for the key reforms to health care that are part of the Build Back Better Plan that will lower drug costs and insurance premiums, expand Medicare benefits, and increase coverage. 81% of CA-52 voters say they support giving Medicare the power to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans, with 63% saying they strongly support it. Just 11% say they oppose it.

COVERAGE:

- Times of San Diego: [Poll in Rep. Peters' District Finds High Support for Medicare Drug Price Controls](#)

FLORIDA

NEW POLL: A new Public Policy Polling survey finds strong bipartisan support in Florida's 7th Congressional District for the key reforms to health care that are part of the Build Back Better Plan that will lower drug costs and insurance premiums, expand Medicare benefits, and increase coverage. 80% of FL-07 voters say they support giving Medicare the power to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans, with 65% saying they strongly support it. Just 11% say they oppose it.

[Read the Full Poll Results Here.](#)

GEORGIA

PRESS EVENT: State Senator Nan Orrock and local health advocates joined Protect Our Care Georgia at an event to call on Congress to bring relief to Georgians struggling to afford their medications by giving Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices.



[Watch the Event Here.](#)

NEW JERSEY

PRESS CALL: New Jersey Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg and local advocates joined Protect Our Care New Jersey at an event to call on Congress to stand up to Big Pharma and bring relief to New Jerseyans struggling to afford their medications by giving Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices.

[Watch the Full Event Here.](#)

NEW POLL: A new Public Policy Polling survey finds strong bipartisan support in New Jersey's 5th Congressional District for the key reforms to health care that are part of the Build Back Better Plan that will lower drug costs and insurance premiums, expand Medicare benefits, and increase coverage. 77% of NJ-05 voters say they support giving Medicare the power to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans, with 61% saying they strongly support it. Just 11% say they oppose it.

COVERAGE:

- **[Insider NJ: Widespread Support for Medicare Negotiation to Lower Drug Prices, Other Key Health Provisions, and the Overall Build Back Better Plan in Rep. Gottheimer's District](#)**

NEW YORK

NEW POLL: A new Public Policy Polling survey finds strong bipartisan support in New York's 4th Congressional District for the key reforms to health care that are part of the Build Back Better Plan that will lower drug costs and insurance premiums, expand Medicare benefits, and increase coverage. 78% of NY-04 voters say they support giving Medicare the power to lower prescription drug prices for all Americans, with 63% saying they strongly support it. Just 13% say they oppose it.

[Read the Full Poll Results Here.](#)

OHIO

PRESS EVENT: State Rep. Brigid Kelly, Cuyahoga County Council member Shontel Brown and local advocates on Wednesday joined Protect Our Care Ohio for a virtual event to call on Congress to stand up to Big Pharma, and bring relief to Ohioans struggling to afford their medications by giving Medicare the power to negotiate for lower drug prices.



[Watch the Event Here.](#)

STATEMENT: Jobless Claims Plunge to 290,000 As President Biden Continues Fight to Get the Country Back on Track

In response to the latest weekly first-time jobless claims plunging to another pandemic low of 290,000, Protect Our Care Executive Director Brad Woodhouse issued the following statement:

“Another week of declining jobless claims means President Biden’s policies to boost the economy are working. By passing the American Rescue Plan, Democrats delivered direct stimulus checks, housing assistance and monthly child tax credit payments to families, billions in state and local aid to keep essential workers on the job, and robust funding for vaccine distribution.

“Now, cases are on the decline as the administration continues its work to promote vaccine mandates, deliver booster shots, and plan for the approval of children’s vaccinations. With more shots in arms and more Americans back to work every day, we have President Biden to thank for nearing the light at the end of this long, dark tunnel.”

CBO: Millions of People Will Gain Affordable Health Coverage Under the Build Back Better Act

The Congressional Budget Office released its analysis of the Build Back Better Act’s health care provisions, including closing the Medicaid coverage gap and making the Affordable Care Act (ACA) premium tax credit enhancements permanent. The CBO found that 3.9 million uninsured Americans would gain coverage and 7.6 million people total would enroll in subsidized insurance under the ACA and Medicaid.

The Build Back Better’s provisions to strengthen the ACA and Medicaid addresses the needs of many low-wage workers whose employers charge too much for limited coverage, forcing families to make impossible decisions between paying for health care and paying for food or rent. Over the past decade, premiums for low-wage workers have increased at a significantly higher rate than wages. In response, Protect Our Care Chair Leslie Dach issued the following statement:

“The CBO’s analysis clearly shows that the Build Back Better Act will have a substantial impact on the health and financial well-being of millions of Americans. Four million uninsured Americans would gain health insurance and millions more would pay less for coverage. The health care measures are already the most popular provisions in the bill, and it is essential that each policy remains in its full form in the final agreement. We commend Speaker Pelosi, Chairman Pallone and Chairman Neal, and House Democrats for leading the charge to make health care a right for every American.”

Spineless: Governors DeSantis and Abbott Try to “Out-Trump” One Another

Republicans have done whatever it takes to distract from their failed response to the pandemic. Since March 2020, they have gone to war with President Biden, Dr. Fauci, and science and sabotaged effective measures like mask and vaccine mandates which would save American lives. Not only have they ignored the proven science that shows these measures work and work well, they have gone above and beyond by forcing anti-protective policies that have done serious damage and put children and families in harm's way. Republicans have been shameless beyond belief.

But no one has been more extreme than Governors Ron DeSantis (FL) and Greg Abbott (TX).

This week, Politico reported on new research that showed “governors in states without vaccine mandates — or where they’ve outright prohibited such a requirement — have ‘significantly lower’ approval ratings for their handling of the coronavirus.”

Bloomberg recently called out the two Governors for trying to “out-Trump” each other simply to appease a fringe base and secure their own political futures: “Hard-line approaches like curtailing school rules aimed at coronavirus safety are losers in polls, but rules framed as expanding ‘freedom’ serve as an extension of Trump’s fire-up-the-base strategy. Far from turning the page on Trump’s GOP, both men are trying to out-Trump one another.”

They need to tread carefully. Voters have made it clear that they trust President Biden, Dr. Fauci and science with the Associated Press recently reporting that a majority of Americans approve of Biden’s handling of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, these Governors continue to have a contest over who can be the most extreme.

In Florida...

- Sun-Sentinel: School districts rightly stand up to DeSantis’ bullying
- Politico: “DeSantis has built a national reputation for fighting any type of Covid restrictions, including school mask mandates and efforts to force businesses to implement vaccine mandates on staff for customers. As the Delta variant surged and DeSantis battled schools over mask mandates, his approval rating dropped below 50 percent, according to an August Quinnipiac University poll.”
- Axios: “DeSantis, who tried to stop local governments and businesses from requiring vaccines or masks, didn't address the COVID numbers or his opponents for Florida governor but focused his criticism on President Joe Biden.”
- The Lakeland Ledger: DeSantis calls for lawmakers to end COVID vaccine mandates in Florida
- Sun-Sentinel: Letters to the Editor: Disbelief abroad over DeSantis’ pandemic policies

- **Politico**: “DeSantis has consistently rejected Covid-related restrictions, including vaccine passports, mask mandates and lockdowns. He has continued a months-long dispute with school districts that defied his order against mask mandates, including docking the salaries of school officials who implement mask requirements without an opt-out policy for parents.”

In Texas....

- **NBC**: Texas Gov. Abbott issues order banning Covid vaccination mandates in rebuke of Biden: “Abbott, who tested positive for Covid in August, has also resisted mask mandates and requiring proof of vaccination. Texas has continued to experience a rise in cases and crowded hospitals, prompting Abbott to invest in monoclonal antibody infusion centers.”
- **The Atlantic**: Greg Abbott Fears Fox News More Than COVID
- **KCEN**: Texas doctors say COVID-19 vaccine mandates are needed, call on Gov. Abbott to retract ban
- **Politico**: “Roughly six in 10 American adults favor vaccine requirements for federal workers and employees of large companies, according to a mid-September Gallup poll. And they’re backed by public health and infectious diseases experts who say such requirements can increase vaccinations and reduce severe illness, death and strain on the health care system....Yet Abbott has similarly railed against mask and vaccine mandates in Texas, going so far this week as to issue an executive order barring ‘any entity’ from enforcing a vaccine requirement.”

What They’re Saying: Vaccines and Mask Mandates (Are Still)

Working

Republicans across the country have not let up on their all-out crusade against science, Dr. Fauci and proven effective measures like vaccine and mask mandates that save lives from Covid-19. Study after study shows that these measures keep people safe, healthy, and protected from the Coronavirus. Republicans have ignored these facts in an attempt to distract from their damaging track records and mishandling of the pandemic and pander to their extreme base.

But voters have made it quite clear that they trust President Biden, Dr. Fauci and the science behind proven effective measures that are keeping cases down and hospital ICUs clear as we head towards an unpredictable flu season. The **Associated Press** recently reported that a majority of Americans approve of Biden’s handling of COVID-19..

There’s no mistaking it: The science is working. Here are the latest proof points:

- **CNN**: New CDC data shows the risk of dying from Covid-19 is 11 times higher for unvaccinated adults than for fully vaccinated adults

- **CNN:** Covid-19 vaccine mandates work, Dr. Anthony Fauci says
- **Reuters:** “Vaccination rates against COVID-19 in the United States have risen by more than 20 percentage points after multiple institutions adopted vaccine requirements in recent months, while case numbers and deaths from the virus are down, Biden administration officials said on Wednesday.”
- **Yahoo:** 'Vaccine mandates are proving to work,' doctor explains
- **WTOP:** New research shows that school mask mandates work
- **Slate:** 96 Percent of New York's Teachers Are Now Vaccinated, Because Mandates Work

Defend The Science

Across the country this week, Republicans have continued to try and “out-Trump” each other, doing whatever it takes to distract from their failed response to the pandemic. Since March 2020, they have gone to war with President Biden, Dr. Fauci, and science and sabotaged effective measures like mask and vaccine mandates which would save American lives. Governors DeSantis (FL), Abbott (TX) have been the most extreme as they continue to pander to their fringe base.

Meanwhile, NIH Director Frances Collins pushed back forcefully against the Rand Paul conspiracy theory on the origin of SARS-CoV-2. As reported by the Washington Post. Collins called out critics of his agency and people who he believes are spreading misinformation to score political points. From the Post: “He said the experiment — which used mice modified with human ACE2 receptors that allow viruses to infect cells — could not possibly have had been linked to the emergence of the pandemic coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.” Additionally, Collins made it clear that ““Those virus genomes were as far away from SARS-CoV-2 as a cow is from a human...””

Key Products & Articles

Short, sourced explainers and debunkers of top Covid-19 issues

Helpful publications on the Covid origin debate that reinforce the theory that SARS-CoV-2 came from nature:

- **Washington Post:** NIH demands unpublished data on coronavirus experiment, but says research is not linked to the pandemic:
 - “But NIH director Francis S. Collins is simultaneously pushing back against critics of his agency and people who he believes are spreading misinformation about the experiment in Wuhan to score political points. He said the experiment — which used mice modified with human ACE2 receptors that

allow viruses to infect cells — could not possibly have had been linked to the emergence of the pandemic coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.”

- **LA Times**: Column: New evidence undermines the COVID lab-leak theory — but the press keeps pushing it
- **Virology Blog**: SARS-CoV-2 related viruses from bats in Laos
- **Salon**: Gain-of-function research: all in the eye of the beholder

This week’s documents are:

- **NEW: SPINELESS: GOVERNORS DESANTIS AND ABBOTT TRY TO “OUT-TRUMP” ONE ANOTHER**
- **NEW: REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN WARNED: “THESE REPUBLICANS TORPEDOED VACCINE EDICTS — THEN SLIPPED IN THE POLLS”**
- **NEW: WHAT THEY’RE SAYING: VACCINES AND MASK MANDATES (ARE STILL) WORKING**
- **THE REVIEWS ARE IN: DR. FAUCI DOCUMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS HIS “INCREDIBLE BODY OF EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE”**
- **A MAJORITY OF AMERICANS TRUST DR. FAUCI, SCIENCE AND BIDEN ON COVID-19 RESPONSE**
- **REALITY CHECK: “GAIN OF FUNCTION” CONSPIRACY THEORY INTENTIONALLY MISLEADING AND IRRELEVANT TO UNCOVERING COVID-19 ORIGINS**
- **FACT CHECK: NO, NIH AND DR. FAUCI DID NOT FUND THE CREATION OF THE CORONAVIRUS**

Message Guidance On Republicans Butchering The Pandemic Response
Key points pushing back on the attacks on experts like Dr. Fauci and science

Republicans have shown they will stop at nothing to distract from their collectively terrible record of mismanaging the pandemic response by spreading disinformation, creating harmful conspiracy theories, and attacking President Biden and Dr. Fauci.

- As Republicans continue to double down on mismanaging the pandemic response, the American people have made it clear that they back science and proven effective measures like vaccine and mask mandates.
- Governors in FL, TX, GA, NH, and other states continue to push harmful policies that put their residents at great risk as we get closer to the holidays and flu season.
- Unfortunately for Republicans, the science and the facts contradict their baseless lies *every single time*.
- Governors DeSantis (FL) and Abbott (TX) have been particularly damaging to their states as they continue to trade the safety and wellbeing of their constituents in order to pander to their fringe base.
 - In Florida: This week, Governor DeSantis called a special session to end COVID restrictions in the state. Recently, appointed Dr. Joseph Ladapo to the position of General Surgeon--an extremist who has peddled dangerous

misinformation, pushed quack cures like hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin and called masks a “distraction.”

- Recent reports now state that Lapado will bring home a \$362,000 paycheck each year, a massive increase from his predecessor and a slap in the face to Floridians who are facing economic hardships due to the pandemic.
- In Texas: Governor Abbott just issued an executive order, banning "any entity" in the state from enforcing a vaccine mandate. This move is a direct contradiction from the popular and protective move by President Biden to require vaccines for workers at companies with 100 employees or more.
- But despite Republicans' shared effort to sabotage the pandemic response, new reports by the Washington Post and countless other news outlets have made it clear: mask and vaccines are working.
- Politico and Bloomberg recently reported on the precarious nature of forcing such unpopular and extreme policies will be for them at the polls as approval ratings for both DeSantis and Abbott have dropped and people are wary of their continued war against proven protection measures like mask and vaccine mandates.
- Moreover, the Associated Press recently reported that a majority of Americans approve of Biden's handling of COVID-19.
 - A majority [57%] of Americans approve of Biden's handling of COVID-19
 - About two-thirds of Americans are at least somewhat confident the COVID-19 vaccines will be effective against virus variants.
 - Roughly 8 in 10 trust their doctors and other health care providers

Consequences of the attacks on science

Disinformation costs lives. Here's the latest on how Americans continue to suffer the consequences of the attacks on science

While Republican Governors DeSantis and Abbott are under attack for undermining science, their states are suffering...

In Florida...

- Sun-Sentinel: School districts rightly stand up to DeSantis' bullying
- Politico: “DeSantis has built a national reputation for fighting any type of Covid restrictions, including school mask mandates and efforts to force businesses to implement vaccine mandates on staff for customers. As the Delta variant surged and DeSantis battled schools over mask mandates, his approval rating dropped below 50 percent, according to an August Quinnipiac University poll.”
- Axios: “DeSantis, who tried to stop local governments and businesses from requiring vaccines or masks, didn't address the COVID numbers or his opponents for Florida governor but focused his criticism on President Joe Biden.”

- **The Lakeland Ledger**: DeSantis calls for lawmakers to end COVID vaccine mandates in Florida
- **Sun-Sentinel**: Letters to the Editor: Disbelief abroad over DeSantis' pandemic policies
- **Politico**: "DeSantis has consistently rejected Covid-related restrictions, including vaccine passports, mask mandates and lockdowns. He has continued a months-long dispute with school districts that defied his order against mask mandates, including docking the salaries of school officials who implement mask requirements without an opt-out policy for parents."

In Texas....

- **NBC**: Texas Gov. Abbott issues order banning Covid vaccination mandates in rebuke of Biden: "Abbott, who tested positive for Covid in August, has also resisted mask mandates and requiring proof of vaccination. Texas has continued to experience a rise in cases and crowded hospitals, prompting Abbott to invest in monoclonal antibody infusion centers."
- **The Atlantic**: Greg Abbott Fears Fox News More Than COVID
- **KCEN**: Texas doctors say COVID-19 vaccine mandates are needed, call on Gov. Abbott to retract ban
- **Politico**: "Roughly six in 10 American adults favor vaccine requirements for federal workers and employees of large companies, according to a mid-September Gallup poll. And they're backed by public health and infectious diseases experts who say such requirements can increase vaccinations and reduce severe illness, death and strain on the health care system....Yet Abbott has similarly railed against mask and vaccine mandates in Texas, going so far this week as to issue an executive order barring 'any entity' from enforcing a vaccine requirement."

...Meanwhile, their political futures are at risk as voters make it clear their extreme policies are losers at the polls.

- **Politico**: "Governors in states without vaccine mandates — or where they've outright prohibited such a requirement — have 'significantly lower' approval ratings for their handling of the coronavirus."
- **Bloomberg**: "Hard-line approaches like curtailing school rules aimed at coronavirus safety are losers in polls, but rules framed as expanding 'freedom' serve as an extension of Trump's fire-up-the-base strategy. Far from turning the page on Trump's GOP, both men are trying to out-Trump one another."
- **Associated Press**: A majority [57%] of Americans approve of Biden's handling of COVID-19

...And we are reminded that science *still* works as masks and vaccines continue to keep Americans safe.

- **CNN**: New CDC data shows the risk of dying from Covid-19 is 11 times higher for unvaccinated adults than for fully vaccinated adults
- **CNN**: Covid-19 vaccine mandates work, Dr. Anthony Fauci says

- **Reuters:** “Vaccination rates against COVID-19 in the United States have risen by more than 20 percentage points after multiple institutions adopted vaccine requirements in recent months, while case numbers and deaths from the virus are down, Biden administration officials said on Wednesday.”
- **Yahoo:** 'Vaccine mandates are proving to work,' doctor explains
- **WTOP:** New research shows that school mask mandates work
- **Slate:** 96 Percent of New York’s Teachers Are Now Vaccinated, Because Mandates Work

In The States

CLIPS

- **Times of San Diego:** Poll in Rep. Peters’ District Finds High Support for Medicare Drug Price Controls
- **Insider NJ:** NEW: Widespread Support for Medicare Negotiation to Lower Drug Prices, Other Key Health Provisions, and the Overall Build Back Better Plan in Rep. Gottheimer’s District

Local Headlines

Arizona

- **Alternet:** Arizona Groups Demand Sinema ‘Stop Obstructing’ On Medicare Expansion
- **KVOA:** Arizonans Gather At Senator Sinema’s Office Over Medicare Expansion

California

- **AP:** Parents Protest California Covid Vaccine Mandate For Kids
- **Times of San Diego:** Poll In Rep. Peters’ District Finds High Support For Medicare Drug Price Controls

Florida

- **Politico:** DeSantis Calls For Special Florida Legislative Session To Fight Biden’s Vaccine Mandate

Hawaii

- **AP:** Hawaii’s Governor Welcomes Travelers As Covid Counts Drop

Idaho

- **AP:** Idaho Health Officials Say Covid Case Numbers Are Flattening

Indiana

- **Indy Star:** More Indiana Schoolchildren Have Had Covid-19 This Fall Than All Of Last School Year

Kentucky

- **KHN:** What Will It Take To Boost Vaccination? The Scene From Kentucky’s Back Roads

Maine

- Washington Post: [The Supreme Court Won't Immediately Block A Maine Vaccine Mandate](#)

Michigan

- AP: [Michigan Moves To Fund Mental Health Like Physical Health](#)

Missouri

- New-Press Now: [Medicaid Expansion Sees Early Progress, Local Health Clinics Spread Word](#)

Montana

- AP: [3 Montana School Districts Go Virtual Or Close Due To Covid](#)

New Jersey

- Insider NJ: [Representatives Andy Kim and Tom Malinowski Held Healthcare Telephone Town Hall](#)
- Insider NJ: [New: Widespread Support For Medicare Negotiation To Lower Drug Prices, Other Key Health Provisions, And The Overall Build Back Better Plan In Rep. Gottheimer's District](#)
- Modern Healthcare: [New Jersey Hospital's New Owners Aim To Bolster Mental Health Services](#)
- NJ.com: [Menendez Opposes Fellow NJ Democrat Pallone's Plan To Lower Drug Prices](#)
- POLITICO: [NJ Vaz Mandate In Place... But Impact Unclear](#)

New York

- AP: [Data: Nearly Two-Thirds Of New Yorkers Are Fully Vaccinated](#)
- Modern Healthcare: [New York City Healthcare Organizations Retained 97% Of Employees After Vaccine Mandate](#)
- USA Today: [New York Mandates Vaccination For All City Workers, But Offers \\$500 To Comply](#)

North Carolina

- North Carolina Health News: [Six Republican Counties Pledged Their Support For Medicaid Expansion. What Changed?](#)

Ohio

- Cleveland.com: [Sen. Rob Portman Argues Expanding Medicaid In Other States Would Be Unfair To Ohio; Sen. Sherrod Brown Disagrees](#)

Oklahoma

- The Oklahoman: [Oklahomans May Notice A Jump In The Covid-19 Death Toll Next Week](#)

Oregon

- AP: [Federal Judge Rejects Bid To Block Oregon Vaccine Mandate](#)

Texas

- AP: [Fauci Dismayed By Texas' Move To Ban Mandates](#)
- CNBC: [Walmart Donated To Texas Gov. Greg Abbott As He Fought Biden Covid Vaccine Mandate](#)

Washington

- AP: [Seattle Touts 99% Compliance With Employee Vaccine Mandate](#)

West Virginia

- The Charleston Gazette-Mail: Vaccine Exemption Bill Heads To Justice

Wyoming

- Gillette News Record: Poll: Medicaid Expansion Popular