



Statement from the Adult Vaccine Access Coalition (AVAC) Ahead of HHS Secretary Kennedy's Congressional Hearings on the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

April 14, 2026

The following can be attributed to Santiago Gonzalez, Manager, AVAC:

"Secretary Kennedy has consistently said he will maintain Americans' access to vaccines. As he prepares to testify before Congress in the upcoming weeks, he has an opportunity to clarify how he will fulfill that commitment.

"Recent federal actions, including significant changes to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and conflicting guidance, have created confusion and mistrust around vaccine recommendations and coverage, making it harder for Americans to get the vaccines they need.

"Recommended adult vaccines in the United States have a strong record of providing protection against severe illness and premature death. For decades, vaccines have been scrutinized through a rigorous scientific, evidence-based, and transparent process that clinicians, insurers, and patients rely on every day. Each year, tens of thousands of adults die from diseases that vaccines can prevent, and many more are hospitalized, miss work, or face medical costs that fall on families and the broader health care system. Keeping vaccines, like the flu, shingles, and RSV vaccines, accessible and affordable is one of the most cost-effective investments we can make for the health of the American people.

"As he prepares to testify, AVAC urges Secretary Kennedy to make a clear commitment to the American people. HHS must continue to ensure all recommended vaccines are covered at no cost under Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance. The Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, which provides an existing patient centric pathway for addressing rare adverse events, must also remain intact and functional. These actions are necessary to maintain stable, affordable access to vaccines.

"Access to vaccines is not a partisan issue. Americans across the country and political spectrum expect to be able to get recommended vaccines to protect the health of themselves, their loved ones, and their communities. Secretary Kennedy's focus moving forward should be to make sure federal policy keeps it that way."