

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 2, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
Secretary of Health and Human Services
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

On February 25, 2025, shortly after your confirmation, I wrote requesting a briefing on the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) strategic, evidence-based plan to reduce heavy metal contamination in baby food. More than sixteen months later, I have received neither that briefing nor evidence that HHS has taken the comprehensive regulatory action necessary to protect infants and young children from toxic heavy metals. I therefore write again to demand both an explanation for your department's continued inaction and prompt action to establish comprehensive, enforceable protections for America's children.

In my previous letter, I expressed concern that the FDA had failed to take meaningful action to reduce infants' and young children's exposure to toxic heavy metals such as arsenic, cadmium, and mercury. I warned that continued delay would needlessly expose children to preventable health risks. More than a year later, those concerns remain because HHS has neither provided the requested briefing nor established comprehensive, enforceable protections to reduce children's exposure to toxic heavy metals.

Five years after my congressional investigation first exposed dangerous levels of toxic heavy metals in baby food, the scientific case for action has only grown stronger while HHS's failure to act has become increasingly indefensible. In April, researchers demonstrated a new approach that enables scientists to trace early-life exposure to toxic metals and link those exposures to measurable differences in brain development and later behavioral outcomes.¹ As the scientific evidence has grown stronger, the justification for continued federal delay has grown weaker. HHS can no longer justify studying a problem that demands regulatory action.²

Infants and young children are uniquely vulnerable to heavy metal exposure because their brains and bodies are developing rapidly, and even low levels of exposure can have lifelong consequences. Parents should be able to trust that the food they feed their children is safe. Every day HHS delays establishing

¹ Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, *Mount Sinai Study Uses Baby Teeth and Brain Imaging to Reveal How Early-Life Metal Exposures Shape Brain Development and Behavior* (Apr. 24, 2026), <https://www.mountsinai.org/about/newsroom/2026/mount-sinai-study-uses-baby-teeth-and-brain-imaging-to-reveal-how-early-life-metal-exposures-shape-brain-development-and-behavior>.

² Lisa Fletcher, Andrea Nejman & Nathan Aaron, *Baby Teeth Reveal Toxic Metal Risks to Developing Brains; Federal Limits Still Don't Exist*, *Spotlight on America* (June 29, 2026; updated June 30, 2026), <https://thenationaldesk.com/news/spotlight-on-america/baby-teeth-reveal-toxic-metal-risks-to-developing-brains-federal-limits-still-dont-exist#>


comprehensive, enforceable protections is another day millions of American families are left without the safeguards they deserve.

Accordingly, I request that you answer the questions set forth in this letter no later than July 16, 2026. I look forward to your prompt response.

1. Since January 20, 2025, what actions has HHS taken to reduce heavy metal contamination in infant formula and baby food, including developing comprehensive, enforceable standards?
2. What additional regulatory or other actions does HHS plan to take to reduce infants' and young children's exposure to toxic heavy metals, and on what timeline?
3. If HHS does not intend to establish comprehensive, enforceable standards for toxic heavy metals in infant formula and baby food, what is the scientific, legal, and policy basis for that decision?
4. Why has HHS not provided the briefing requested in my February 25, 2025, letter, and when will it do so?
5. What scientific studies, risk assessments, and other evidence has HHS relied upon since January 20, 2025, in determining whether additional federal action is warranted?

The scientific evidence is clear, the risks to children are well established, and the time for further delay has long since passed. I urge you to move beyond additional study and take concrete action to reduce heavy metal contamination in infant formula and baby food by establishing comprehensive, enforceable protections America's children deserve. The consequences of your agency's continued inaction will not be borne by government officials during their time in public service, but by children for the rest of their lives.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress