

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 25, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

With your confirmation behind you, you are now in charge of our nation's health care system. President Trump, in appointing you, promised the American people that through you, his Administration will "Make America Healthy Again." While we disagree on many things, I trust that you will agree with me that one vitally important way to accomplish that goal is to improve the nation's food supply, starting by eliminating contaminants in mass produced baby food.

In 2021, as chairman of the House Oversight Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy, my investigation into heavy metals in our food supply found baby foods had lead levels up to 177 times those that are allowable in drinking water.¹ This investigation pushed the FDA to create its *Closer to Zero* initiative which set timelines for the FDA to meet when regulating toxic heavy metals.² I have continued to urge the FDA to take meaningful action to remove these contaminants from baby food at every opportunity.

In the four years since my investigation, FDA has failed to promptly finalize action levels for toxic heavy metals, such as arsenic, cadmium, and mercury, in foods intended for infants and young children. While I welcomed FDA's recent establishment of guidelines for the levels of lead in processed baby foods, there remains work to be done to ensure other heavy metal levels are appropriately set and ensure producers adhere to standards.

FDA has continually pushed back its own deadlines and caused parents across the country to worry about their babies' exposure to toxic heavy metals. FDA has not only failed to remove heavy metals from baby food but even to take incremental steps to move closer to this goal. Finalizing guidance to manufacturers on heavy metals is only the first step in a long road to removing neurotoxins from baby food. I call on you to urge the future FDA commissioner to take on baby food safety as one of the agency's top priorities.

Secretary Kennedy, I am writing to request a briefing from you on HHS and FDA's strategic, evidence-based plan to combat heavy metals in baby food. Parents across the country must be provided with answers and a way forward. Please provide a written response no later than March 15, 2025. There is an immediate opportunity to start fulfilling President Trump's promises with bipartisan support. I urge you to take it.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

¹ <https://oversightdemocrats.house.gov/news/press-releases/oversight-subcommittee-staff-report-reveals-top-baby-foods-contain-dangerous>

² <https://www.fda.gov/food/environmental-contaminants-food/closer-zero-reducing-childhood-exposure-contaminants-foods>