



Know your environment.
Protect your health.

September 21, 2020

Dr. Robert C. Redfield, Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mailstop F-80
4770 Buford Highway, NE
Atlanta, Ga., 30341
Via email: olx1@cdc.gov

Dear Dr. Redfield:

Over the past few months, a steady stream of revelations has made it clear that as the nation grapples with what is by far the gravest infectious disease challenge in its history, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention under your leadership is no longer the front-line protector of America's public health, but a threat to it.

It is equally clear, Dr. Redfield, that it's time for you to go.

During your stewardship of the agency, you have enabled political leaders to usurp and corruptly communicate the very science of disease prevention and control for which the CDC is renowned the world over. At a time when literally millions of lives are at stake in the United States and around the globe from the threat of COVID-19, you have allowed the CDC's good name and reputation to be used for partisan political ends that directly conflict with the research, conclusions and guidance of the agency's scientists.

The CDC has confronted political controversy, pressure and heated policy debates at many points in its history. But never before has its leader dragged the agency through such a series of manifestly deadly misstatements of science, willful communications blunders, and life-threatening guidance flip-flops – all at the behest of political leaders whose publicly avowed goal is to minimize the mortal danger the novel coronavirus poses to the American people.

Indeed, if you are so willing to participate in the corrosion of the CDC's scientific integrity in these circumstances – a disease that has killed more than 200,000 Americans in just six months – how might you bend under gusts of political and economic wind to compromise other areas of the agency's work, such as foodborne infections, toxic chemical contaminants, or vaccines and immunizations?

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We cannot risk finding out. Your continued service as director threatens irreparable, long-term damage to the agency's service and credibility. The American people simply can no longer trust the CDC to live up to its motto of "saving lives, protecting people" with you as its leader.

Dr. Redfield, it is time for you to go.

Sincerely,

Ken Cook
President, Environmental Working Group
Washington, D.C.

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