

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Big City Health Leaders in Measles Hot Spots Issue Plea to Parents: Please, Vaccinate Your Children

Dr. Wilma Wooten (San Diego - San Diego County), Dr. Jeff Duchin (Seattle - King County), and Dr. Bob England (Phoenix – Maricopa County) Call Attention to Children Left Vulnerable to Life-Threatening Diseases

ATLANTA (FULTON COUNTY)

BALTIMORE CITY

BOSTON

CHICAGO

CLEVELAND

DALLAS (DALLAS COUNTY)

DENVER

DETROIT

HOUSTON

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

MIAMI (MIAMI-DADE COUNTY)

NEW YORK CITY

PHILADELPHIA

PHOENIX (MARICOPA COUNTY)

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

SAN ANTONIO

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN JOSE (SANTA CLARA COUNTY)

SEATTLE (KING COUNTY)

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington, DC – Today, top public health officials of three areas affected by the measles outbreak – San Diego, Seattle and King County, and Maricopa County in Phoenix – are taking a strong stand to promote vaccination in their areas. With the support of the Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC), Drs. Wilma Wooten, Jeff Duchin, and Bob England released three Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in their cities and counties to raise awareness about the thousands of unvaccinated children still vulnerable to deadly infectious diseases. The BCHC is a national advocacy group comprising the top public health officials of twenty of the largest cities in the United States.

The BCHC is currently suggesting a number of local, state, and national policy actions, including strengthening vaccination registries, closing or minimizing vaccination loopholes, enforcing existing regulations that promote vaccination (such as making vaccination a requirement to attend public school), and reinstating immunization funds that would be cut under the president's proposed budget.

As those more long term goals are pursued, BCHC members in the areas first affected by the measles outbreak decided to contribute to efforts to convince hesitant parents that vaccination is vital to preserving the public's health.

In one PSA, Public Health Officer Wilma Wooten, MD, MPH, says, "Thousands of children in San Diego County are behind in their measles vaccine, putting everyone at risk. Help keep all our kids safe by vaccinating your child."

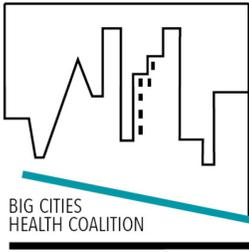
In Phoenix, Director of Maricopa County's Department of Public Health, Bob England, MD, tells the public, "There are at least 25,000 children in the Valley behind in their measles vaccine, putting everyone at risk. Help protect all our kids. Vaccinate yours."

From Seattle, Interim Health Officer Jeff Duchin, MD, says, "Thousands of kids in Seattle and King County are behind in their measles vaccines. Help keep our kids and our communities safe by vaccinating your child."



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The PSAs will be available to stream on the BCHC website at www.bigcitieshealth.org/measles.

The Big Cities Health Coalition (BCHC) is a forum for leaders of America's largest metropolitan health departments to exchange strategies and jointly address issues to promote and protect the health and safety of the 46 million people they serve. Together, these public health officials directly affect the health and well being of one in seven Americans. For more information about BCHC, please visit www.bigcitieshealth.org.

The BCHC is a project of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) made possible with funding from the de Beaumont Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. NACCHO represents the nation's 2,800 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit www.naccho.org.

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