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VIA EMAIL

Hon. Mary Travis Bassett, MD
Commissioner
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Bassett:

I am reaching out following reports of incidents across the State involving the use and sale of fraudulent COVID vaccination records, including a shocking case on Long Island where two licensed medical professionals are accused of running a staggering \$1.5 million fraud operation that may have resulted in thousands of fake records being entered into the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS) and the New York City Citywide Immunization Registry (NYC CIR).

This particular incident, and the extremely disturbing conduct alleged, raises several serious concerns that need to be addressed in order to protect the health and safety of the public, and I would appreciate your responses to the following questions:

- Is there already a process in place at the Department of Health, in conjunction with law enforcement agencies investigating and prosecuting these cases, to ensure that fraudulent data is being removed from government databases in instances where it has been determined that no actual vaccination was given?
- Is the Department of Health utilizing any pro-active strategies or tools to flag potentially fraudulent activity in government databases, for example, where certain providers are logging statistically higher rates of vaccination? In the recent Long Island case, a very small pediatric healthcare facility had potentially logged thousands of entries into the system within a very short period of time, which could potentially have served as a red flag for fraud.
- Is the State's Excelsior Pass system capable of revoking passes that have been issued based on false records inputted into government databases?

If the State is not currently taking actions to remove fraudulent data, proactively combating the problem of “vaxx card mills,” and revoking Excelsior Passes from those engaging in this unlawful conduct, I am urging immediate action be taken by the Department of Health to address these issues in order to protect public health and safety. I would also note that this may not only be a problem impacting COVID vaccination records, but potentially regular childhood vaccination records as well, and any strategy that protects COVID vaccination records from fraud should be applied similarly to cases of childhood vaccinations.

Defending the validity of records proving vaccination status is vital to protecting New York families from preventable illness and avoiding an unnecessary protraction of the pandemic. We must do everything we can to combat this fraud on our community, and I appreciate your assistance in doing so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anna M. Kaplan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Anna M. Kaplan
State Senator
7th Senate District