Alliance for mRNA Medicines

January 16, 2026

The Honorable Heath Sessions
Chair, Medical and Health Affairs Subcommittee
Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee
South Carolina House of Representatives
Columbia, S.C. 29211
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Dear Chairman Sessions and Subcommittee Members,

On behalf of the Alliance for mRNA Medicines (AMM), thank you for the opportunity to offer our perspective on H.4262, *a bill to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by adding section 44-1-175 so as to prohibit the use of certain synthetic mRNA-based gene therapies by healthcare professionals in the state of South Carolina; to require professional licensing board to report violations to the department of public health; and for other purposes.*

Opposition to H.4262: Impact on Patient Choice and the mRNA Sector

The Alliance for mRNA Medicines (AMM) opposes H.4262, as the legislation would restrict the ability of South Carolinians to choose mRNA-based medicines and interfere in the doctor-patient relationship. These limitations would directly affect individuals seeking innovative treatments and harm the broad community of companies and academic researchers driving mRNA research and development in South Carolina and across the nation.

Although the bill seeks to narrowly define the scope of prohibited mRNA medical products, it fails to recognize that mRNA technology is highly versatile. The same research methods and platforms used to develop mRNA-based therapies for infectious diseases are also essential for creating vaccines and treatments for cancer and rare diseases. Any legislation that restricts the use of mRNA medicines—even those targeted at specific products—will ultimately undermine patient care and the future development of new medicines for a range of deadly diseases.

Finally, restricting access to certain mRNA therapies would also undermine the legacy of President Trump's leadership in Operation Warp Speed, which saved lives and catalyzed American leadership in mRNA research. The research foundation built by Operation Warp Speed has played a central role in advancing the next generation of life-changing medicines and creating new jobs. Turning our backs on that legacy now would be a disservice to American patients and workers.

About the Alliance for mRNA Medicines:

The Alliance for mRNA Medicines (AMM)[1] is the leading global organization dedicated to advancing and advocating for mRNA and next-generation encoding RNA therapeutics and vaccines for the benefit of patients, public health, and society. Our mission is to propel the future of mRNA medicine, improve patients' lives, and advance scientific knowledge by convening and empowering mRNA industry leaders, innovators, scientists, and other key stakeholders.

AMM's membership, which is composed of over 90 organizations, consists of biotechnology companies, biopharmaceutical companies, contract development and manufacturing organizations (CDMOs), suppliers, raw material providers, and academic researchers.

What are mRNA medicines?

Messenger RNA, or mRNA, is a natural molecule found in every cell in the human body that carries instructions for making proteins essential to health and disease prevention. mRNA medicines work by delivering instructions that prompt cells to produce specific proteins that create an immune response to fight or prevent illness. After a protein is made, the mRNA naturally breaks down and leaves the body, while the therapeutic effect remains. Researchers have spent more than 60 years preparing the science and infrastructure for mRNA technology which is unlocking new treatment options across a wide range of life-threatening illnesses, including cancer, infectious diseases, rare diseases, and genetic conditions.

Why mRNA medicines matter to patients

mRNA therapies help keep Americans healthier and living longer. Many mRNA therapies offer a highly targeted approach to treatment. Because they are based on natural processes in the body, these treatments may cause fewer side effects than other treatments like chemotherapy. For some patients, an mRNA medicine could be the only treatment option.

mRNA is highly versatile. The same mRNA platform used to develop cancer treatments is utilized for vaccines and rare disease therapies. Limiting access to certain mRNA therapies will not only leave people exposed to infectious diseases, it also will harm the pipeline and manufacturing capacity for future mRNA therapies targeting other diseases.

[1] https://mrnamedicines.org/

People should be free to choose the best available treatments for themselves and their families. By encouraging further mRNA research, we provide Americans more options to stay healthy and live longer, more productive lives. The government should not be in the business of picking winners and losers, deciding which patients can receive a potentially life-saving treatment and which patients cannot. Everyone deserves the freedom to consult with their doctor and make the best health decision possible.

Decades of research have shown that mRNA therapies are safe and effective. In 1960, an American scientist discovered that the body naturally produces billions of mRNAs. mRNA medicines use our bodies' natural ability to make proteins to fight disease. For decades, America's researchers have tested mRNA-based therapies in placebo-controlled, double-blind studies to prove they are safe and effective—the same gold standard used for all new medicines.

mRNA medicines undergo robust and comprehensive clinical testing, rigorous independent and FDA review processes, and ongoing safety monitoring. Like any treatment or developed drug, health authorities closely monitor mRNA medicines to ensure continued safety and efficacy.

mRNA medicines do not change or interact with your DNA. In fact, mRNA medicines utilize your body's natural ability to produce proteins to combat disease. The mRNA stays on the outer part of your cells and never enters the nucleus, where your DNA lives. Once the mRNA has delivered its message and your body creates the corresponding protein, the mRNA breaks down and naturally exits the body.

Investing in mRNA medicine maintains America's global leadership in medical innovation. The U.S. is the world leader in drug development, and we should not cede our competitive advantage to other nations. Investing in mRNA protects our economic and national security interests and the ability to provide breakthrough care for patients, so Americans are not overly dependent on medicine from other countries.

President Trump Catalyzed mRNA Research

President Trump's leadership through Operation Warp Speed[2] catalyzed American leadership in mRNA research, and we are only beginning to see its transformational impact on American patients and manufacturing. Operation Warp Speed made possible advances in vaccine development that improve our ability to respond rapidly to emerging threats. It also established the infrastructure in the United States to develop, manufacture, and distribute breakthrough mRNA therapies.

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[2] Real Clear Politics "Protecting President Trump's Legacy and mRNA Research" Jeff Coller, October 27, 2025. Accessed at: https://www.realclearhealth.com/articles/2025/10/27/protecting_president_trumps_legacy_and_mrna_research_1143498.html

mRNA Research in South Carolina

As reported[3] by the *Post and Courier* on September 1, 2025, mRNA medicines are currently being tested in clinical trials across South Carolina, including five vaccine trials for flu and other infectious diseases at sites in Charleston, Columbia, Greenville, Mount Pleasant, Myrtle Beach, North Charleston, and Spartanburg.

The Medical University of South Carolina Hollings Cancer Center is participating in two large Phase 3 trials for melanoma and lung cancer that are testing a new treatment called individualized neoantigen therapy, a personalized mRNA-based treatment designed to train the immune system to fight cancer more effectively.

"'These trials bring hope by offering access to treatments that patients couldn't get otherwise,' said Jennifer Kinsey, the program manager for melanoma and lung cancer trials in the Clinical Trials Office at Hollings."[4]

This legislation would undermine this very kind of research and deny people in South Carolina access to these therapies—or any future mRNA therapies targeting infectious diseases—should they prove successful.

The impact of the mRNA Sector

A comprehensive market analysis conducted by our organization in partnership with User Cue[5] found that companies working in mRNA currently employ an average of 328 employees, (ranging from 2 to 6,000) with budgets of less than a million to greater than $250 million. Roughly two-thirds (66%) of mRNA jobs are based in the United States. The report concluded that "mRNA technology is at an important developmental stage. The research demonstrates unequivocally that mRNA technology represents a transformative platform with substantial healthcare and economic implications. With appropriate policy support, mRNA can strengthen American biotechnology leadership, generate high-value employment and manufacturing, enhance national security preparedness, and deliver innovative therapeutic approaches for patients with limited treatment alternatives. Without strategic support, innovation activities will

[3] Post and Courrier "Vaccine method vilified by health officials is in clinical trials all over SC, including shots for cancer" Tom Corwin, September 1, 2025. Accessed at: https://www.postandcourier.com/health/mrna-vaccine-covid-hollings-cancer-center-clinical-trials-sc/article_175064a1-44e2-4438-b4b3-3524c4f59ab8.html

[4] Medical University of South Carolina. "A personalized shot at stopping cancer from coming back" Hayley Kamin, October 15, 2025. Accessed at : https://www.musc.edu/content-hub/news/2025/10/16/a-personalized-shot-at-stopping-cancer-from-coming-back

[5] The mRNA Innovation Ecosystem. Alliance for mRNA Medicines. May 2025. Accessed at: https://assets.mrnamedicines.org/uploads/2025/05/AMM-National-Assessment-of-the-mRNA-Industry.pdf

likely migrate internationally, potentially redefining the United States' position from innovation leader to technology recipient."

Freedom for individuals to protect themselves against infectious diseases

As noted earlier, this legislation would take away choices from patients particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases, including pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals, and the elderly. A state-level analysis of averted deaths during the COVID-19 Delta and Omicron waves shows that mRNA vaccines developed during the Trump administration saved an estimated 8,455 lives in the state.[6] The current measles outbreak in South Carolina, which now includes 434 cases[7], drives home the importance of giving people the option to vaccinate themselves and their families against infectious disease.

Conclusion

AMM thanks the members of the Committee for holding this hearing to discuss this legislation. This hearing is an important part of a larger, ongoing discussion taking place across the country about the value of vaccines and our government's response to the recent pandemic. There is no question that mistakes were made then, including mistakes that overpromised the benefits of vaccination, downplayed the risks, and imposed coercive mandates on the American people. We share those concerns and believe we need to learn from these mistakes to be better prepared in the future.

At the same time, we should not abandon what President Trump once called an "American medical miracle." Continued support for mRNA technology can help more patients fight serious diseases, create good-paying jobs, and preserve America's global leadership in medical innovation. We hope you will consider the harmful impacts this legislation would have on this state and its citizens.

[6] Renton, et al. Journal of General Internal Medicine, August 24, 2023 "State-Level Excess Mortality and Potential Deaths Averted in US Adults During the Delta and Omicron Waves of COVID-19" accessed at: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10817860/

[7] Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy. Stephanie Soucheray, January 14, 2026. "Measles cases soar in South Carolina, top 400." Accessed at: https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/measles/measles-cases-soar-south-carolina-top-400