

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 29, 2025

ASHINGTON - Today, the NAACP, the nation's largest and oldest civil rights organization, sent an open letter to U.S. Senate leaders, vehemently opposing Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s nomination for Secretary of Health and Human Services. The letter, authored by NAACP President & CEO, Derrick Johnson, and NAACP Director of Health and Well-Being, Dr. Chris T. Pernell was sent ahead of RFK's first nomination hearing that began today. This public letter is the first formal opposition the Association has made to President Trump's cabinet nominees.

### **NAACP President & CEO, Derrick Johnson shared the following statement:**

*"The NAACP stands with the medical community, and many Americans, in opposition to confirming Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services. Let's not forget - COVID-19 is still alive and disproportionately impacting the Black community. Under no circumstance, should a conspiracy theorist with a track record of disregard for the sanctity of life be appointed to lead one of our nation's most powerful health institutions. Senators, we demand that you put people over politics and say no to RFK."*

### **Excerpts from the letter include:**

*"We don't trust him. We can't afford to allow Black lives to hang in the balance."*

*"If he were to be chosen, misinformation, disinformation, and anti-science beliefs would be weaponized in catastrophic ways."*

*"As a nominee, he lacks the credentials, merit, or qualifications to lead a department of this magnitude or the scope of HHS."*

*"Confirming Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as Secretary of Health and Human Services is prescribing a death sentence to public health in the United States," said **Dr. Chris T. Pernell, Director, NAACP Center for Health Equity**. "As a medical professional, I cannot imagine a world in which a meritless, unethical conspiracy theorist provides directives to myself, and millions of other providers who have dedicated their lives to save the lives of others. It's time to say no."*