**Letters to Newspapers**

**Note The following:**

* The writer must sign his or her full name and address and daytime phone number for verification.
* Some newspapers, like *The Boston Globe*, provide the emails of reporters; if you send a letter to the editor questioning the accuracy of a story, it’s good to cc the reporter. Alternatively, you can just write to the reporter.
* Keep letters to 250 words or fewer.
* Email address for letters to the editor at *The Boston Globe*: letter@globe.com;
* Email address for letters to the editor at *The Times Union* in Albany: tueditor@globe.com;

**6/14/ 2021 Letter to *The Boston Globe* Editor**

**Editor email address:** **letter@globe.com**

Headline: “Large study finds Novavax’s coronavirus vaccine about 90 percent effective”

I am writing in response to your article titled “Large study finds Novavax’s coronavirus vaccine about 90 percent effective.” It's evident that any drug company that develops a vaccine has a large, inherent financial conflict of interest in terms of the study results regarding the efficacy of a new vaccine: a positive result may yield millions if not billions in profits, while a negative result means back to the drawing board or worse. Given this conflict of interest, I find it interesting that reporters who write stories like this do not seek out independent scientists, physicians and statisticians to provide an objective analysis of the study protocols. Until I see such an objective analysis, I'll take the results of Novavax's study with a grain of salt.

**6/6/2021 Letter to the Boston Globe Editor**

**Email address for letters:** **letter@globe.com**

Dear Editor,

I just read your article titled “At Dartmouth College, first-year suicides a grim reminder of a year of loneliness.” In this article you state that among other things that “Research has begun to document the degree to which the pandemic has disproportionately devastated the mental health of young people.” It’s logically essential to distinguish between the ***impact of the pandemic*** and the ***steps*** ***that*** colleges, governments and other entities ***took in response*** to the pandemic. The fact is that college-age young people were—and still are—at a vanishingly small risk of serious illness and death due to COVID-19. Because the risk is so small, many doctors, scientists, public health officials and others around the country counseled strongly against the draconian measures implemented by colleges to supposedly protect students, especially since asymptomatic transmission of the illness was never proven (in fact, the evidence is that asymptomatic transmission is not an issue). It was these ***measures*** that caused the extreme anxiety, loneliness and ultimately the suicides—along with other adverse consequences—among the college population, ***not the pandemic***.

**5/28/2021 Letter to the Times Union newspaper in Albany**

**Email address for letters:** **tuletters@timesunion.com**

Dear Editor,

I just read the *Times Union* article titled “What is HIPAA? And why are so many people confused?” and wish to offer the following comments. This is far from strictly a conservative or libertarian issue. As a life-long, registered Democrat, I am very concerned about the increasing loss of privacy associated with an individual’s COVID-19 vaccine status. Whether or not HIPAA allows an individual to refrain from providing his or her vaccine status to an employer or some other entity is not the real issue: the real issue is whether there is a fundamental human right to choose whether or not to receive a medical treatment and to keep one’s choice private. I believe there is. If someone can be fired for not disclosing his or her vaccine status, then this privacy right and right to choose one’s medical treatments does not exist in practice. This is because requiring someone to reveal his or her vaccine status is inherently coercive, especially if someone’s job is on the line. Moreover, requiring people to divulge their vaccine or other medical treatments could lead to a situation where millions of people who may choose not to get a treatment become, de facto, second class citizens, to be discriminated against and perhaps even demonized for their choice. We’ve seen from history how destructive such a situation can become.

**5/25/2021 Letter to Boston Globe Reporter**

**Note: The email contact for Globe reports follows the article. Usually, the email is the is in the form: “first name.last name@globe.com (in this case,** **Jonathan.saltzman@globe.com****).**

Dear Mr. Saltzman,

I just read your article titled “Moderna says its vaccine prevented 100 percent of COVID-19 cases in study of adolescents 12 to 17.” Given the inherent conflict of interest of a pharmaceutical company running tests on the efficacy of its own experimental vaccine in a certain low-risk population and then declaring it to be 100% effective in preventing COVID-19 cases, I’d love to know whether and how you investigated accuracy of these claims. Did you, for instance, consult scientists and doctors without a conflict of interest who are qualified to address questions such as the soundness of the testing methodology, the nature of the placebo that was administered, the statistical validity of the results, possible issues of long-range harm from the vaccine, the cost-benefit analysis of administering an experimental COVID vaccine to adolescents at all, and other important questions? You quoted Dr. Rubin’s opinion, but he was on the panel that cleared this vaccine in the first place, so he cannot be considered as having an unbiased opinion. Dr. Rubin did point out that the information on the efficacy of the vaccine was contained in a press release from Moderna, the manufacturer (not an independent oversight group), with the implication that such a press release should be taken with at least a modest grain salt—an implication many readers may miss. The reason I raise these questions is that many parents rely on the information published in prestigious newspapers like the *Globe* when making health choices for their children. A balanced article would ideally include information from VAERS, the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, which has been collecting data on adverse reactions that do, in fact, exist. Using numbers like “100 percent” in the headline, quoting doctors who use phrases like “adolescents and their families can now be protected against disease,” and not reminding readers that the article refers to an experimental injection for an extremely low-risk group may give an unbalanced view of the situation to parents contemplating enrolling their children in this vaccine campaign.

If you have a moment, I’d love to hear more about how you investigated the accuracy of Moderna’s claims.

**5/6/2021 Letter to the Boston Globe**

**Editor email address:** **letter@globe.com**

Dear Editor,

Today’s *Boston Globe* headline, “In Massachusetts, 1.6 million adults are struggling to get enough to eat,” should be proof enough that the COVID-19-related lockdowns and shutdowns in MA were inadvisable from the start. As your article mentioned, this number represents an increase of around 600,000 people from the previous year. It should now be abundantly clear that devasting the MA economy by impeding healthy people from working in order to protect a tiny minority of at-risk individuals—who could have been easily protected by the types of focused measures used throughout history and well-supported by medical science—not only did not work, but proved to be counter-productive and extremely harmful on multiple levels. And food insecurity is not the only problem associated with this unwise sledge-hammer approach: increased suicides, bankruptcies, domestic violence, depression and deaths from other serious illnesses were also a consequence. It’s time for our elected leaders and senior government officials in Massachusetts to frankly admit the failure of this ill-advised strategy and immediately reopen the state to normal business and societal activities.

**3/31/2021 Letter to the Boston Globe**

**Editor email address:** **letter@globe.com**

Dear Editor,

I read your article today titled *‘I wouldn’t want his job.’ Despite criticism, Baker gets high marks for pandemic handling in new poll*. I wonder whether the hotel workers the *Globe* reported on who have lost their jobs due to Baker’s draconian Covid measures would give Baker high marks. I wonder whether the people standing on long food-pantry lines, who are facing eviction due to lost jobs, whose businesses have suffered dramatic financial losses or bankruptcy, or families that have experienced suicides or substance abuse due to the hopelessness caused by lockdowns and shutdowns would give Baker high marks. I wonder whether parents of children whose education has been adversely impacted due to Baker’s Covid measures and who are seeing growing signs of psychological stress in their children due to isolation and mask-wearing would give Baker high marks. And I doubt the people who have suffered serious side effects from experimental Covid vaccines that have been neither tested for long-term efficacy or safety would give Baker high marks. There is, however, one group that would give Baker extremely high marks: the pharmaceutical industry, which is making billions of dollars selling experimental vaccines with total protection from legal liability courtesy of federal legislation. I’m sure Baker is much-beloved by big pharma.

**2/21/2021 Letter to the Boston Globe**

**Editor email address:** **letter@globe.com**

Dear Editor,

I just read your article titled “Lives on hold, the oldest baby boomers wait—impatiently—for COVID-19 vaccines.” As a baby boomer about to turn 66, I can assure you that far from waiting impatiently for a COVID-19 vaccine, I do not plan to get an experimental vaccine that incorporates an untested biotech technology and that has undergone no long-term safety and efficacy studies—especially in light of the fact that is has already caused deaths and severe side effects. I trust my health and well-being to eating healthy food, exercising outdoors, spending time with friends and family, and not allowing myself to become anxious about the possibility of future illness. Please do not generalize about my generation when it comes to attitudes about COVID-19 and vaccines.