

# Committee to Protect Medicare: Physicians Blast Sen. Johnson for Promoting Vaccine Hesitancy, Endangering Lives

Posted on Thursday, Apr 29, 2021

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To view a video of Dr. Helms reading her statement, [click here.](#)

Milwaukee, WI — Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) in a Thursday [interview](#) with conservative Wisconsin radio host, Vicki McKenna, herself a [vaccine skeptic](#), called into question the importance of vaccinating the nation for COVID-19, stating distribution should've been "limited" and saying he's becoming "highly suspicious" of the "big push to make sure everybody gets the vaccine." Johnson seemingly ignored the importance of protecting entire communities through vaccination. He also went on to imply that corners had been cut when approving the FDA-authorized vaccines, even though [that is false](#).

"Sen. Ron Johnson's vaccine-skeptical statements aren't just irresponsible, they're outright dangerous, endangering the lives of people across our state and nation, and threatening to prolong this awful pandemic," said Dr. Robert Freedland, an ophthalmologist in La Crosse, and Wisconsin State Lead for the Committee to Protect Medicare. "With confirmed cases of [COVID-19 variants](#) in Wisconsin still on the rise, our public leaders should be listening to epidemiological experts, not advancing a partisan agenda based on misinformation. The people of Wisconsin deserve better and I hope that Sen. Johnson starts to put people first and encourages them to get vaccinated."

According to the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#), more than 41% of the population has received at least one dose of the vaccine, and roughly 30% have been vaccinated. Experts predict that 70-90% of the population needs to be vaccinated to reach herd immunity — the level when enough people become immune to the disease via vaccination or infection to make its spread unlikely.

“I am deeply concerned over Sen. Johnson’s statements, just the latest of many in his long line of those elevating fringe theories,” said Dr. Ann Helms, a neurologist in Milwaukee. “Where things stand right now, we need many more people vaccinated to reach herd immunity and truly eradicate the virus. Getting vaccinated is the best way for Wisconsinites to protect themselves and their families but also their communities. By sowing more unfounded doubt about vaccines, Senator Johnson is endangering lives and preventing us from getting back to normal sooner.” (View a video of her statement [here](#)).