

August 6, 2025

**To champion the prevention,
diagnosis, and treatment of chest
diseases through education,
communication, and research.**

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The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
The Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

On behalf of the 18,000 members of the American College of Chest Physicians (CHEST), we are writing to express our profound apprehension concerning your reported intention to eliminate all members of the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF). We would view this step as detrimental to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of lung disease and the efforts of clinicians to provide essential patient care.

The established integrity of USPSTF recommendations provides critical access to preventive care for patients, particularly those facing financial barriers. It is essential to continue the rigorous and transparent methodological process employed by the USPSTF, utilizing independent evidence-based practice centers and incorporating public comment and expert reviews, to ensure evidence-based recommendations without the risk of bias. We implore you to retain the current members and adhere to the established, transparent membership and development processes.

CHEST supports the broad scope of evidence-based preventive services currently recommended by the USPSTF. For patients seeking preventive care from pulmonary, critical care, and sleep medicine providers, many USPSTF recommendations are vital for providers to inform and treat patients in achieving optimal respiratory health. Such recommendations include lung cancer screening, tobacco smoking cessation and prevention methodologies, and screening for latent tuberculosis.

Sowing doubt in the expertise and scientific role of USPSTF members will likely result in the disruption of progress made towards improving critical access to preventive care. This is especially evident in lung cancer screening—an area of vital importance to CHEST—where only 18% of eligible individuals currently receive annual low-dose CT scans¹. Eliminating financial barriers is a critical step toward increasing participation in lifesaving early detection programs.

At CHEST, we remain dedicated to supporting recommendations based on solid scientific study, guided by clinical experience, and protected from undue political influence. We urge you to uphold the same standards of integrity and transparency when shaping the future of preventive care through the USPSTF and throughout U.S. Department of Health and Human Services by retaining the previously appointed USPSTF members and continuing the regular meeting schedule.

Sincerely,



John Howington, MD, MBA, FCCP
CHEST President



Robert Musacchio, PhD
CHEST CEO

1. Bandi P, Star J, Ashad-Bishop K, Kratzer T, Smith R, Jemal A. Lung Cancer Screening in the US, 2022. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2024;184(8):882–891. doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2024.1655