



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Sen. Hoylman Declines RFK, Jr. Debate Challenge, Refuses to Spread Vaccine Misinformation

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 4, 2021

| ISSUE: **SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, SD 27, VACCINE MISINFORMATION**

Two weeks ago, New York State Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WF-Manhattan), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, called on Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey in a **letter** to permanently suspend Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s Twitter account and the organization he founded and chairs, Children's Health Defense, for repeatedly spreading misinformation about the efficacy and safety of COVID-19 vaccines.

Sen. Hoylman's letter laid out **specific cases** in which Kennedy's accounts had spread harmful and false medical information, while citing, **Twitter's recently introduced "five strike system"** restricting access to users who repeatedly violate Twitter's "COVID-19 Misleading Information Policy." Kennedy and Children's Health Defense have shared tweets that represent at least five strikes each and therefore should be removed on the basis of Twitter's own policy. For similar reasons, Facebook recently removed Kennedy's personal Instagram account for "repeatedly sharing debunked claims about the coronavirus or vaccines."

Last week, Kennedy responded to Hoylman's letter with one of his own, bizarrely quoting Game of Thrones author George R.R. Martin, challenging Hoylman to a Zoom debate on science, and peddling more debunked conspiracy theories about vaccination.

Sen. Hoyer said: “Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.’s rantings and citations of debunked pseudoscience add nothing to our national discourse. We won’t take the bait - and we are not going to give him a platform to continue to spread medical disinformation through a debate.

“Scientists agree: these conspiracy theories are wrong and pose a danger to our public health.

“As COVID cases continue to increase worldwide, we need to stand together and show the public that these vaccinations are safe and effective. The only way we will finally defeat this pandemic is if we get vaccinated. I encourage Kennedy to get vaccinated as well.”