

Anti-Vaxxers Like Congressman-Elect Mark Green Shouldn't Be in Government



By Alex Berezow — December 16, 2018

Anyone who believes that vaccines cause autism shouldn't be in a position of authority. The fundamental problem with someone making such a claim is not that s/he is wrong. Instead, it reveals someone who's conspiratorially minded and lacks critical thinking skills. That's not the sort of person who should be in charge of anything important.



Credit: Storyblocks [1]

One of these beliefs is not like the other: The moon landing was faked. 9/11 was an inside job. Vaccines cause autism.

What all the beliefs have in common is that they're completely bonkers and quite rightly shunned by sane society. But the belief that vaccines cause autism is unique; unlike the other two myths, this one gets people killed. That is not an exaggeration; the gigantic measles outbreak that has swept Europe has claimed the lives of 37 people.

What makes the vaccine-autism myth even more astounding is that some high-profile people still feel comfortable claiming that it's true. Congressman-Elect Mark Green, who represents a district in Tennessee, is one of those people. Stunningly, he is also a medical doctor.

But it gets worse. Green also believes that the CDC knows that vaccines cause autism, but that the organization is fraudulently hiding it. He also blamed autism on preservatives, a belief that has

long been debunked.

The Swift Condemnation of Mark Green

Thankfully, the [condemnations came swiftly](#) [2]. His soon-to-be colleague, Tennessee Senator Lamar Alexander, tweeted: “Vaccines take deadly, awful, ravaging diseases from horror to history,” and, “Vaccines save lives.” Green also got hammered by the medical community and people on Twitter.

The public shaming worked. Green [backtracked](#) [3], saying that his comments were “misconstrued” (no, they weren’t) and that children should be vaccinated (thank goodness).

But the damage has been done. Apologizing or “clarifying” a position makes no difference. That is why, in my opinion, anyone who believes that vaccines cause autism shouldn’t be in a position of authority, period. The fundamental problem with a person who makes such a claim is not that he is wrong; it’s that he is conspiratorially minded and lacks critical thinking skills. That’s not the sort of person who should be in charge of anything important.

COPYRIGHT © 1978-2016 BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2018/12/16/anti-vaxxers-congressman-elect-mark-green-shouldn%E2%80%99t-be-government-13669>

Links

[1] <https://www.storyblocks.com/stock-image/this-is-not-a-serious-injury-only-a-scratch-bp1robtqgjfb24cwv>

[2] <https://eu.tennessean.com/story/news/politics/2018/12/13/tennessee-mark-green-vaccine-autism-comments-senator-lamar-alexander-tweets-favor/2301641002/>

[3] <https://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/tennessee-rep-elect-walks-back-dangerous-anti-vaxx-comments-but-says-more-research-should-be-done>