

## United States Senate

February 26, 2021

Janet Woodcock, M.D.  
Acting Commissioner  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
10903 New Hampshire Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20993

Dear Acting Commissioner Woodcock,

I write to you with great concern over recent news reports detailing the high levels of toxic chemicals within pre-packaged baby food.<sup>1</sup> According to reports, some of the baby foods were found to have up to 91 times the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved arsenic level, up to 177 times the FDA-approved lead level, up to 69 times the FDA-approved cadmium level, and up to 5 times the FDA-approved mercury level. Exposure to these toxins threatens infant neurological development and may cause other long-term developmental issues.

Perhaps most alarming was that manufacturers might be knowingly selling tainted baby food to unsuspecting parents that are trying to do everything they can to provide for and nourish their children. This is about the safety of the most vulnerable among us, and these dangerous practices by food makers must end now. It is my hope that every company works with the FDA and complies with efforts to make their products safe for consumption. However, in light of this reporting, I ask that you answer the following questions:

- What process does the FDA have to inspect baby food and baby food ingredients to ensure compliance with FDA standards?
- What does the FDA do when they receive reports that toxic metals over FDA standards may be in baby food?
- What is the FDA's plan to help these companies phase out the harmful toxins within baby food?
- What is the penalty for a company that sells baby food that is not in compliance with FDA food safety standards?

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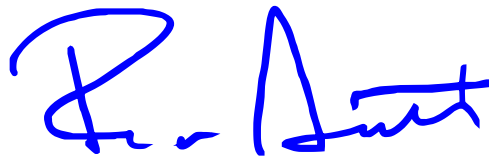
<sup>1</sup> A. Palowski, "Baby foods may contain 'dangerously high levels' of toxic heavy metals, report finds" *Today Show*, February 8, 2021. <https://www.today.com/health/levels-toxic-metals-have-been-found-baby-food-report-says-t208366>

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- In 2019, Healthy Babies Bright Futures issued a similar report on baby food and found that 95% of tested baby food contain toxic chemicals.<sup>2</sup> What actions, if any, did the FDA take after that report came out?
- What steps can the FDA take to empower parents to make informed decisions about the health and safety of baby food?

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott  
United States Senator

cc: Frank Yiannas, Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response

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<sup>2</sup> A. Palowski, "Baby foods may contain 'dangerously high levels' of toxic heavy metals, report finds" *Today Show*, February 8, 2021. <https://www.today.com/health/levels-toxic-metals-have-been-found-baby-food-report-says-t208366>