

States Move to Oppose WHO's 'Pandemic Treaty,' Assert States' Rights

Utah and Florida passed laws intended to prevent the WHO from overriding states' authority on matters of public health policy, and Louisiana and Oklahoma have legislation set to take effect soon pending final votes.

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Two states have passed laws — and two states have bills pending — intended to prevent the World Health Organization (WHO) from overriding states' authority on matters of public health policy.

[Utah](#) and [Florida](#) passed laws and [Louisiana](#) and [Oklahoma](#) have legislation set to take effect soon pending final votes. Several other states are considering similar bills.

The WHO member states will convene next month at the [World Health Assembly](#) in Geneva, Switzerland, to vote on two proposals — the so-called “pandemic accord” or “[pandemic treaty](#),” and amendments to the International Health

Regulations (IHR) — that would give the WHO sweeping new pandemic powers.

The Biden administration supports the [two WHO proposals](#), but opposition is growing at the state level.

Proponents of the WHO's proposals say they are vital for preparing humanity against the “next pandemic,” perhaps caused by a yet-unknown [“Disease X.”](#)

But the bills passed by state legislatures reflect frequently voiced criticisms that the WHO's proposals imperil [national sovereignty](#), medical and bodily sovereignty and [personal liberties](#), and may lead to global vaccine mandates.

Critics also argue the WHO proposals may open the door to global digital [“health passports”](#) and global censorship targeting alleged [“misinformation.”](#)

Such criticisms are behind state legislative initiatives to oppose the WHO, on the basis that states' rights are protected under the [10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution](#). Under the 10th Amendment, all powers not delegated to the federal government are reserved to the states. Such powers, critics say, include public health policy.

Mary Holland, president of [Children's Health Defense](#) (CHD), told [The Defender](#):

“It is encouraging to see states like Louisiana, Oklahoma and Utah pass resolutions to clarify that the WHO has no power to determine health policy in their states. Historically, health has been the purview of state and local government, not the U.S. federal government.

“There is no legitimate constitutional basis for the federal government to outsource health decision-making on pandemics to an international body. As state legislatures become aware of the WHO’s agenda, they are pushing back to assert their autonomy — and this is welcome.”

Internist [Dr. Meryl Nass](#), founder of [Door to Freedom](#), told The Defender that, contrary to arguments that the drafters of the constitution could not foresee future public health needs, [vaccines](#), doctors and medicine were all in existence at the time the 10th Amendment was written. They were “deliberately left out,” she said.

This has implications for the federal government’s efforts in support of the WHO’s proposals, according to Nass. “The government doesn’t have the authority to give the WHO powers for which it lacks authority,” she said.

Tennessee state Rep. Bud Hulse (R-Sullivan County) told [The Epoch Times](#), “We’re almost to a place in this country that the federal government has trampled on the sovereignty of

states for so long that in peoples' minds, they have no options.”

“It's like whatever the federal government says is the supreme law of the land, and it's not. The Constitution is the supreme law of the land,” he added.

Utah, Florida laws passed

On Jan. 31, Utah Gov. Spencer Cox (R) signed [Senate Bill 57](#), the “Utah Constitutional Sovereignty Act,” into law. It does not mention the WHO, but prohibits “enforcement of a federal directive within the state by government officers if the Legislature determines the federal directive violates the principles of state sovereignty.”

In May 2023, Florida passed [Senate Bill 252](#) (SB 252), a bill for “Protection from Discrimination Based on Health Care Choices.” Among other clauses, it prohibits businesses and public entities from requiring proof of vaccination or prophylaxis for the purposes of employment, receipt of services, or gaining entry to such entities.

According to Section 3 of SB 252:

“A governmental entity as defined ... or an educational institution ... may not adopt, implement, or enforce an international health organization's public health policies or guidelines unless authorized to do so under

state law, rule, or executive order issued by the Governor.”

Nass told The Defender that Florida’s legislation offers a back door through which WHO the state can implement WHO policies because it allows a state law, rule or executive order by the governor to override the bill. According to Nass, efforts to strengthen the bill have been unsuccessful.

SB 252 was one of four bills Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) signed in May 2023 in support of [medical freedom](#). The other bills were [House Bill 1387](#), banning [gain-of-function research](#), [Senate Bill 1580](#), protecting physicians’ freedom of speech and [Senate Bill 238](#), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of people’s medical choices.

Louisiana, Oklahoma also push back against the WHO

The [Louisiana Senate](#) on March 26 voted unanimously to pass [Senate Law No. 133](#), barring the WHO, United Nations (U.N.) and [World Economic Forum](#) from wielding influence over the state.

According to the legislation:

“No rule, regulation, fee, tax, policy, or mandate of any kind of the World Health Organization, United Nations, and the World Economic Forum shall be enforced or implemented by the state

of Louisiana or any agency, department, board, commission, political subdivision, governmental entity of the state, parish, municipality, or any other political entity.”

The bill is now [pending Louisiana House of Representatives approval](#) and if passed, is set to take effect Aug. 1.

On April 24, the Oklahoma House of Representatives passed [Senate Bill 426](#) (SB 426), which states, “The World Health Organization, the United Nations and the World Economic Forum shall have [no jurisdiction in the State of Oklahoma.](#)”

According to the bill:

“Any mandates, recommendations, instructions, communications or guidance issued by the World Health Organization, the United Nations or the World Economic Forum shall not be used in this state as a basis for action, nor to direct, order or otherwise impose, contrary to the constitution and laws of the State of Oklahoma any requirements whatsoever, including those for masks, vaccines or medical testing, or gather any public or private information about the state’s citizens or residents, and shall have no force or effect in the State of Oklahoma.”

According to Door to Freedom, the bill was first introduced last year and [unanimously passed the Senate](#). An amended version will return to

the Senate for a new vote, and if passed, the law will take effect June 1.

Legislative push continues in states where bills opposing the WHO failed

Legislative initiatives opposing the WHO in other states have so far been unsuccessful.

In Tennessee, lawmakers proposed three bills opposing the WHO, but “none of them made it over the finish line,” said Bernadette Pajer of the [CHD Tennessee Chapter](#).

“Many Tennessee legislators are concerned about the WHO and three of them filed resolutions to protect our sovereignty,” Pajer said. “Our legislature runs on a biennium, and this was the second year, so those three bills have died. But I do expect new ones will be filed next session.”

The proposed bills were:

- [House Joint Resolution 820](#) (HJR 820), passed in the Tennessee House of Representatives. The bill called on the federal government to “end taxpayer funding” of the WHO and reject the WHO’s two proposals.
- [House Joint Resolution 1359](#) (HJR 1359) stalled in the Delayed Bills Committee. It proposed that “neither the World Health Organization, United Nations, nor the World Economic Forum shall have any jurisdiction or power within the State of Tennessee.”
- [Senate Joint Resolution 1135](#) (SJR 1135) opposed “the United States’ participation in

the World Health Organization (WHO) [Pandemic Prevention Preparedness and Response Accord](#) (PPPRA) and urges the Biden Administration to withdraw our nation from the PPPRA.”

Amy Miller, a registered lobbyist for [Reform Pharma](#), told The Defender she “supported these resolutions, especially HJR 1359. She said the bill “went to a committee where the sponsor didn’t think it would come out since a unanimous vote was needed and one of the three members was a Democrat.”

Tennessee’s HJR 820 came the closest to being enacted. According to Nass, this bill was “flawed,” as it “did not assert state sovereignty or the 10th Amendment.”

Another Tennessee bill, [House Bill 2795 and Senate Bill 2775](#), “establishes processes by which the general assembly [of the state of Tennessee] may nullify an unconstitutional federal statute, regulation, agency order, or executive order.”

According to The Epoch Times, this would give Tennessee residents “the right to demand that state legislators vote on whether or not to enforce regulations or executive orders that violate citizens’ rights under the federal or state constitutions.” The bill is tabled for “summer study” in the Senate.

In May 2023, [Tennessee passed legislation](#) opposing “[net zero](#)” proposals and the U.N. [Sustainable Development Goals](#) — which have been connected to “green” policies and the implementation of [digital ID for newborn babies](#) and for which the U.N. has set a target date of 2030 for implementation.

According to The Epoch Times, “Maine state Rep. Heidi Sampson attempted to get a ‘joint order’ passed in support of personal autonomy and against compliance with the WHO agreements, but it garnered little interest in the Democrat supermajority legislature.”

In Alabama, the Senate passed [House Joint Resolution 113](#) opposing the WHO. The bill was reported out of committee but, according to Nass, it stalled.

[Other states](#) where similar legislation was proposed in the 2024 session or is pending include [Georgia](#), [Idaho](#), [Iowa](#), [Kentucky](#), [Michigan](#), [New Hampshire](#), [New Jersey](#), [South Carolina](#) and [Wyoming](#).

Recent Supreme Court ruling may curtail federal government's powers

While opponents of the WHO's proposed “pandemic agreement” and IHR amendments point to the states' rights provision of the 10th Amendment, others argue that a 1984 U.S. Supreme Court decision in [Chevron v. Natural](#)

[Resources Defense Council](#) allowed federal agencies to assert more authority to make laws.

The tide may be turning, however. According to The Epoch Times, “The current Supreme Court has taken some steps to rein in the administrative state, including the landmark decision in [West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency](#), ruling that federal agencies can’t assume powers that Congress didn’t explicitly give them.”

Nass said that even in states where lawmakers have not yet proposed bills to oppose the WHO, citizens can take action, by contacting the office of their state governor, who can issue an executive order, or their attorney general, who can issue a legal opinion.

[Door to Freedom](#) has also developed a [model resolution](#) that state legislative bodies can use as the basis for their own legislation.

“It’s important for people to realize that if the federal government imposes something on the people, the people can go through their state’s powers to overturn it,” Nass said.