

DeSantis Urges Biden to Let Unvaccinated Novak Djokovic Compete in Miami Open, 'Time to Put Pandemic Politics Aside'



Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is calling on President Joe Biden to “put pandemic politics aside” and allow tennis star Novak Djokovic into the U.S. to play in the upcoming Miami Open after he was denied entry for refusing to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

“The only thing keeping Novak Djokovic from participating in the Miami Open tennis tournament is President Biden’s misguided and unscientific COVID-19 vaccination requirement for foreigner travelers,” Desantis [tweeted](#) on Wednesday.

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for foreigner travelers.

Mr. President – lift your restrictions and let him compete.
pic.twitter.com/fFyhNoUV4S

– Ron DeSantis (@GovRonDeSantis) [March 7, 2023](#)

In a letter, DeSantis called out Biden for his hypocrisy in allowing thousands of unvaccinated migrants to flood the southern border without proof of vaccination and pointed out Djokovic, who has natural immunity, has entered the U.S. twice – once during the Biden administration – without any health incident.

“In sum, the current travel ban, as applied to Mr. Djokovic – and presumably millions of other unvaccinated visitors – seems completely ungrounded in logic, common sense, or any genuine concern for the health and welfare of the American people,” Desantis wrote.

Biden’s October 2021 proclamation preventing entry into the U.S. by noncitizen nonimmigrants applies to those traveling by air, while the Department of Homeland Security announced a similar restriction in January 2022 for non-citizens seeking to enter the country at land ports and ferry terminals at Mexico and Canadian borders.

“But your administration does not appear to have issued analogous restrictions for non-U.S. individuals seeking to enter the country by boat,” DeSantis pointed out, suggesting Djokovic could travel into the country by boat to Florida.

DeSantis reminded Biden that his position is unsupported by science, which now shows COVID-19 vaccines are largely ineffective and, at a minimum, inferior to natural immunity. Moreover, the U.S. remains one of “only a handful of countries that require foreign visitors to have received a COVID

vaccination,” he said.

“Indeed, in an interview on Sept. 18, 2022, you personally declared that ‘the pandemic is over,’ and your administration has already communicated to Congress that the COVID-19 emergency will formally end on May 11,” DeSantis wrote.

“The time has come to give up the fiction that COVID-19 vaccines remain a necessary tool to promote public health.”

Djokovic was [forced to withdraw](#) from the BNP Paribas Open in California after being denied entry to the U.S. because he is unvaccinated. Although he requested a vaccine waiver, it was rejected by the Department of Homeland Security.

Djokovic was able to play in the Australian Open – and won – in January after being deported from the country last year for refusing to get vaccinated.

Senators Rick Scott and Marco Rubio of Florida supported Djokovic and called on Congress to eliminate Biden’s “bogus vaccine mandate.”

“It has come to our attention that your administration is in receipt of a request to waive the current vaccine mandate for international travelers entering the United States from top-ranked men’s tennis player Novak Djokovic. We write to urge you to grant the requested waiver, which is necessary to allow Mr. Djokovic to compete in the Miami Open professional tennis tournament held in our home state of Florida beginning March 19, 2023,” the Republicans said in a joint letter.

“In September 2022, you plainly declared to a national audience on ‘60 Minutes’ that ‘the [COVID-19] pandemic is over,’ and, earlier this year, Dr. Anthony Fauci published a professional article acknowledging the limited efficacy of vaccines in protecting against respiratory pathogens, like the novel coronavirus,” the senators wrote.

“In light of these changing circumstances and admissions by you and members of your own administration, the current restrictive vaccine mandate which you have maintained for international travelers entering the United States seems outdated and worthy of rescission.

“Mr. Djokovic is a world-class athlete in peak physical condition who is not at high risk of severe complications from COVID-19. It seems both illogical and misaligned with the opinions of your own administration to not grant him the waiver he requests so that he may travel to the U.S. to compete in a professional event.”

Despite his vaccination status, Djokovic was [allowed to play](#) in the 2021 U.S. Open.