

\$3.25
Thursday,
September 18, 2025

Portland Press Herald

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Details, C8

pressherald.com

Panel expected to recommend delaying kids’ hepatitis B shots

The looming change would come from Health Secretary RFK Jr.’s vaccine policy group. Pediatricians warn that it could facilitate a comeback of a disease virtually eradicated among U.S. children.

By JACKIE FORTIER
KFF Health News

A key federal vaccine advisory panel whose members were recently replaced by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is expected to vote to recommend delaying until age 4 the hepatitis B vaccine that’s currently given to newborns, according to two former senior officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“There is going to likely be a discussion about hepatitis B vaccine, very specifically trying to dislodge the birth dose of hepatitis B vaccine and

“The next generation of people who wear white coats will have to deal with hepatitis B, when we could have cut it off at the pass.”

WILLIAM SCHAFFNER
professor of infectious diseases,
Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

to push it later in life,” said Demetre Daskalakis, former director of the National Center for Immunization

and Respiratory Diseases. “Apparently this is a priority of the secretary’s.”

The vote is expected to take place during the meeting of the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices scheduled for Thursday and Friday.

For more than 30 years, the first of three shots of hepatitis B vaccine has been recommended for infants shortly after birth, virtually eradicating the potentially fatal disease among American children over that time span.



A federal vaccine panel, recently reshaped by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., front, is expected to vote to delay the hepatitis B shot for newborns. (ERIC HARKLEROAD/KFF HEALTH NEWS)

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Portland Press Herald ENTERTAINMENT
SUNDAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 14, 2025

go

THE BEAT GOES ON
CHECK OUT TALKIES TO GO AND MORE ENTERTAINMENT
THE CLINE BETWEEN NOW AND THE END OF THE YEAR, 2025.02

6 things ‘The Paper’ and Press Herald
newsrooms have in common

Surround sound
The calendar is packed with concerts you won’t want to miss ... **GO / B1-8**

TODAY’S
ALMANAC
September 18, 2025

Today is the 261st day of 2025. There are 104 days left in the year.

Today in history:
On Sept. 18, 2020, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a towering champion of women’s rights who became the court’s second female justice, died at her home in Washington at age 87, of complications from pancreatic cancer.

Also on this date:
In 1793, President George Washington laid the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol.

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which created a force of federal commissioners charged with returning escaped slaves to their owners. The act was repealed in 1864 during the American Civil War.

In 1851, the first edition of The New York Times was published.

In 1970, rock star Jimi Hendrix died in London at age 27.

In 2014, voters in Scotland rejected independence, opting to remain part of the United Kingdom in a historic referendum.

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Maine Trust for Local News



Favor Kabwe poses Wednesday for his family and friends following the naturalization ceremony at the University of Southern Maine campus in Portland. Kabwe, who was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was one of 50 people who became U.S. citizens in an event presided over by Chief U.S. District Court Judge Lance Walker. (PHOTOS BY DARYN SLOVER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

‘A HUGE RELIEF’
Amid immigration crackdown, naturalization ceremony holds deep meaning for new citizens

The event in Portland confers citizenship on 50 people from 28 countries.

By RANDY BILLINGS
Staff Writer

PORTLAND — Favor Kabwe struggled to find the words to describe his feelings after being naturalized as an American citizen.

After a moment, they came to him. “A huge relief,” the 39-year-old Auburn resident said.

Relief, not only for accomplishing a goal he’d been working toward for more than six years. But also because he no longer had to worry about being forced to return to the Congo.

“Finally, I belong here,” said Kabwe,

dressed in an impeccable blue suit. “This is my home.”

Kabwe was one of 50 people from 28 countries who officially became U.S. citizens during a naturalization ceremony at the University of Southern Maine’s Hanaford Hall on Wednesday.

The moment comes during the Trump administration’s aggressive crackdown on illegal immigration, and as overheated rhetoric is driving an increase in political violence, including the killing of a



The naturalization ceremony took place on Constitution Day, commemorating the document that laid out the foundation and values of the country.

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‘THE LIST IS ONLY GETTING LONGER’
Maine’s forests, yards and lakes under siege by invasive species

As they reshape the landscape, nonnative plants and insects present a growing threat. Experts urge early detection and public vigilance.

By JOE CHARPENTIER
Staff Writer

Five years ago, it was just a thin green carpet of wiry grass spreading under trees in the wilds of Georgetown. Today, Japanese stiltgrass has become a much bigger concern. Ecologists warn that the plant produces thousands of seeds, crowds out native wildflowers and seedlings, alters the soil, and leaves brittle thatches, raising the risk of wildfire.

Now, the invasive species can be found in about six different spots with several more suspected.



Hilary Neckles cuts purple loosestrife along the Kennebec River in Hallowell's Granite City Park last summer. (JOE PHELAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER)

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Maine mom sues maker of popular online games

Saying her complaint is ‘not a war on fun,’ Casey Henderson says apps like Roblox, Minecraft and Fortnite are addictive and pose safety concerns.

By EMILY ALLEN
Staff Writer

A Maine mother is suing several popular video game companies, accusing them of profiting off of her 9-year-old and other children who have become addicted to their products.

“This litigation is not a war on fun,” Casey Henderson’s complaint, filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court of Maine, begins.

Instead, she claims these corporations — known for games like Fortnite, Minecraft and Roblox — have

concealed the “known risks” of excessive gaming from parents, exploiting a system of endless puzzles, obstacles and add-on purchases that make it harder for kids to log off.

“It becomes this fantasy world, where you never run out of things to do,” Henderson’s attorney Brett Dwight Baber said in an interview. For Henderson’s child, Baber said, this has come “at the expense of their school work,

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