



Sooners start launched Moore's career **SPORTS, 1C**

DEM SENATORS CALL FOR RESIGNATION OF HHS SECRETARY

Angry lawmakers grill RFK Jr. on CDC chaos



Health and Human Services Secretary Robert Kennedy Jr. testifies before the Senate Finance Committee on Sept. 4 in Washington, D.C. The committee met to hear testimony on the Trump administration's health care agenda. GETTY IMAGES

Parties sharply split on public health approach

Adrianna Rodriguez, Swapna Venugopal Ramaswamy, Jay Stahl and Zac Anderson
USA TODAY

Senators alarmed by chaos at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention grilled Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. over what some are calling his politicization of lifesaving vaccines and his past promises not to interfere in scientific decisions.

Kennedy, a longtime vaccine skeptic who has promoted misinformation about public health, recently ousted his handpicked CDC director, Dr. Susan Monarez, with President Donald Trump's backing in a blowup that saw several top officials quit the agency.

The health secretary said firing the CDC director was "absolutely necessary."

"These changes were absolutely necessary adjustments to restore the agency to its role as the world's gold standard public health agency with a central mission of protecting Americans from infectious diseases," he told senators at the Sept. 4 hearing before the Senate Fi-



Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Washington, questions Kennedy during the Sept. 4 hearing. EVELYN HOCKSTEIN/REUTERS

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nance Committee.

Kennedy criticized former CDC officials for the agency's policies during the COVID-19 pandemic, calling them "nonsensical" and claiming they "destroyed small businesses" and "violated civil liberties."

"They did not do their job," he said.

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Michigan schools hold the line, still require vaccines

Lily Altavena and Kristen Jordan Shamus
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Florida state leaders, including its surgeon general, are putting pressure on lawmakers to repeal vaccination laws, including requirements that schoolchildren be vaccinated.

While there have been no apparent calls from Michigan's leaders to repeal school vaccination requirements, the news from Florida pushes an already-escalated debate about public health into the forefront. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) blasted Florida's announcement in a news release.

"When children are sick and miss school, parents also miss work, which not only impacts those families, but also the local economy," wrote Dr. Susan Kressly, president of the AAP. "We are concerned that

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AUTO PRODUCTION

GM plans some EV plant shift shutdowns

With tax credit expiring, automaker is adjusting

Jackie Charniga and Jamie L. LaReau
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

General Motors' Spring Hill Assembly plant in Tennessee is planning several weeks of downtime in the coming months, according to a memo obtained by the Detroit Free Press.

Additionally, the Detroit automaker told the Free Press on Sept. 4 that it is adjusting future production plans at its Fairfax Assembly plant in Kansas City, Kansas, and at its CAMI Assembly Plant line in Ontario, Canada.

Spring Hill makes the Cadillac Lyriq SUV and Vistiq, while Fairfax is currently closed as the facility prepares to produce the Chevrolet Bolt EV. CAMI produces the BrightDrop electric delivery van.

"General Motors is making strategic production adjustments in alignment with expected slower EV industry growth and customer demand by leveraging our flexible ICE and EV manufacturing footprint," GM spokesman Kevin Kelly said in a statement. "GM's U.S. manufacturing footprint remains our strength, and we are in the process of investing nearly \$5 billion over the next two years to further increase domestic vehicle production, enabling the ability to assemble more than 2 million vehicles per year in the U.S."

Spring Hill will close the week of Oct. 6 and the week of Thanksgiving, as well as the full month of December, according to the memo sent to employees Sept. 3. The change will impact vehicle assembly as well as the teams that assemble battery packs for EV batteries, GM confirmed. Ultium Cell employees will not be affected.

Separately, Fairfax Assembly, which ended production earlier this year of the Cadillac XT4 and the Chevrolet Malibu, is no longer planning to add a second shift once construction ramps up on the Bolt. GM said this summer it plans to begin assembly of the gas-powered Chevrolet Equinox in Fairfax by mid-2027.

Plans were to start with one shift in November, according to the company website, but now GM says it will wait on market conditions before making the decision to expand to a second

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MI cannabis workers strike over rights

They aim to unionize, join others in industry

Adrienne Roberts
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

Several employees of a Michigan marijuana company are hoping to accomplish a still-rare feat in the state's nearly 6-year-old recreational cannabis industry: to unionize.

Eight employees of Exclusive Brands in Ann Arbor, which grows, processes and sells marijuana at seven dispensaries throughout Michigan, have been on strike since Aug. 28 over the company's



Christine Morse, a budtender at Exclusive Ann Arbor Marijuana & Cannabis Dispensary for more than four years, stands with fellow employees at a strike outside the Ann Arbor store on Sept. 4. DAVID RODRIGUEZ MUNOZ/DFP

failure to recognize its workers' right to join a union and its firing of a union supporter in its processing facility, according to a spokesperson for the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (the union the employees are hoping to join).

While it's unknown exactly how many of the nearly 40,000 cannabis industry workers in Michigan are represented by a union, only a few unionized dispensaries, processing facilities and grow operations have emerged across Michigan in recent years, making the strike at Exclusive Brands a notable event in the industry's labor movement.

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