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Noem fired amid growing criticism

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President Donald Trump fired Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem yesterday after growing tensions over the department's handling of immigration and disaster response.

Trump announced on Truth Social that he nominated Markwayne Mullin, a Republican senator from Oklahoma, to replace Noem.

"Markwayne will work tirelessly to Keep our Border Secure, Stop Migrant Crime, Murderers, and other Criminals from illegally entering our Country, End the Scourge of Illegal Drugs and, MAKE AMERICA SAFE AGAIN," Trump posted. "Markwayne will make a spectacular Secretary of Homeland Security."

Mullin is a member of the Cherokee Nation and a former professional MMA fighter. He is a regular supporter of Trump's actions and policies.

Mullin thanked Trump for the nomination in a post on X.

"I look forward to earning the support of my colleagues in the Senate and carrying out President Trump's mission alongside the department's many capable agencies and the thousands of patriots who keep us safe every day," he said.

Although Noem is no longer secretary, Trump appointed her to a new position.

"The current Secretary, Kristi Noem, who has served us well, and has had numerous and spectacular results (especially on the Border!), will be moving to be Special Envoy for The Shield of the Americas, our new Security Initiative in the Western Hemisphere we are announcing on Saturday in Doral, Florida," he said in the post. "I thank Kristi for her service at 'Homeland.'"

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) posted a press release thanking Noem and calling her "the most successful DHS Secretary in history."



Kristi Noem with the Western States Sheriff's Association in Reno, NV.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SEC_NOEM ON INSTAGRAM.

"President Trump and Secretary Noem restored the rule of law, delivered the most secure border ever, removed hundreds of thousands of dangerous illegal aliens, created safer communities, strengthened cyber defense, fixed disaster response, launched initiatives that are reshaping American air travel, and has made America safer for generations to come," the press release said. "The American people and our posterity are better off today, tomorrow, and for generations to come because of Secretary Noem's dedication to public service."

Noem said in the press release and in a post on X that she looked forward to working with Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth "to dismantle cartels that have poured drugs into our nation and killed our children and grandchildren."

"The Western Hemisphere is absolutely critical for U.S. security. In this new role, I will be able to build on the partnerships and national security expertise, I forged over the last 13 months as Secretary of Homeland Security," she said.

DHS has been shut down for weeks due to legislators refusing to fund it without changes to policies for immigration enforcement. Noem testified before members of the Senate on Tuesday, facing criticisms and concerns from Republicans as well as Democrats.

Noem had been facing increasing scrutiny since the federal immigration agents killed Renee Good and Alex Pretti, two American citizens, in Minneapolis. At the hearing, Noem said she regretted the deaths, but she did not retract her earlier comments claiming the victims were engaging in "domestic terrorism."

Mullin will still need to be confirmed by the Senate to step into the role, but Politico predicted that he is likely to have a straightforward path to confirmation.



Kristi Noem with officials and representatives in Arizona.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SEC_NOEM ON INSTAGRAM.

Connecticut sues to block RFK Jr.'s vaccine schedule overhaul

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Connecticut Attorney General William Tong joined 15 states in a lawsuit to block President Donald Trump administration's overhaul of the nation's childhood immunization schedule, according to a Feb. 24 press release.

The complaint named Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., acting Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Jay Bhattacharya and the CDC and HHS as defendants, according to Connecticut to 's press release.

The lawsuit was prompted by a "decision memo" from the CDC that reduced the amount of recommended childhood vaccines from 17 to 11, according to NPR.

According to the decision memo, the CDC no longer recommends the vaccines that protect against rotavirus, meningococcal disease, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, COVID-19 and respiratory syncytial virus.

Tong criticized Kennedy for his lack of medical expertise in the press release.

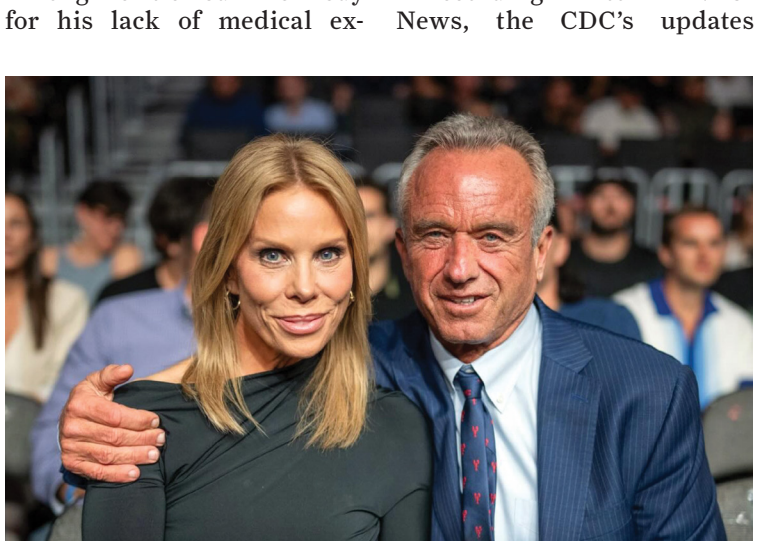
"Vaccines save lives," Tong wrote in the press release. "Trump and RFK Jr. are risking children's lives. RFK Jr. is not a doctor. He is not a scientist. His friends are not any more knowledgeable or qualified."

The press release states that for children born in the U.S. from 1994 to 2023, researchers estimate that regular childhood vaccinations prevented roughly 508 million cases of illness, 32 million hospitalizations and over 1.1 million deaths.

> "Trump and RFK Jr. are risking children's lives. RFK Jr. is not a doctor. He is not a scientist. His friends are not any more knowledgeable or qualified."
>
> **WILLIAM TONG**

"We are suing today to protect lives, and to make sure that our nation's powerful public health guidance follows the law and reflects the facts," Tong said.

According to NBC-News, the CDC's updates on the U.S. childhood vaccine schedule was effective immediately and will more closely resemble Denmark's vaccination schedule.



RFK Jr. posing with his arm around his wife, Cheryl Hines.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @ROBERTFKENNEDYJR ON INSTAGRAM.

"For generations, these vaccinations have successfully limited the spread of contagious diseases, diminished their impacts, and kept the public safe and healthy," Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont said. "There is no legitimate medical rationale for changing this... Medical decisions need to be determined by science, not conspiracy theories."

> *"Vaccines save lives"*
>
> **WILLIAM TONG**

Connecticut is joined in the lawsuit by the Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro and attorneys general from Colorado, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.



Connecticut Attorney William Tong speaking at a press conference. PHOTO COURTESY OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL ON FACEBOOK.

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