

"Hearing to Consider The Nomination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Of California, to Be Secretary of Health and Human Services"

Transcript

00:05:32 All right. Good Morning, CHD. Here we are waiting online for the hearing, the confirmation hearing

00:05:38 of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. And I'm here with Dr. Suzanne Coffee and Angela.

00:05:44 Baron Chiropractors from Charlottesville, Virginia. Tell us, why are you here? Because.

00:05:51 We need somebody who understands healthcare and not drug care. And so, again,

00:05:57 We want to make sure that. Vaccine manufacturers are liable again.

00:06:02 So that we can have healthy people.

00:06:05 And still retain our freedom of choice. Do you see a lot of vaccine injury in your chiropractic?

00:06:10 Practices.

00:06:13 Angela, anything you want to add much? Because most of my patients are very natural minded, but yes.

00:06:18 It does exist, and I'm trying to educate young moms as choices.

00:06:24 And any other things you want to tell the audience.

00:06:28 I'm just so glad to be here and. Supporting Dovey Kennedy and getting him elected to be a HSB. Thank

00:06:35 you. Thank you so much. I am here with Melanie Dragon of New Jersey. Tell us who. You're with? I'm

00:06:40 with New Jersey Public Health Innovation Political Action Committee in New Jersey. And why are you

00:06:45 here? I'm here to support Bobby. Because he supported New Jersey. For almost a decade, and I

00:06:51 wouldn't be any other place because he's always. Come to New Jersey. When we called him. And as

00:06:56 everyone knows, in 2019, 2020,

00:06:59 We preserve the religious exemption and we're forever indebted to him as well as all the advocates.

00:07:05 He showed up. Right. Thank you so much, Melanie. So I'm here with Jill Perez and.

00:07:12 Amy Lezzki. And Amy Lezzki, also from New Jersey. We are. So why are you here today.

00:07:18 For Bobby. He was very supportive of us in Trenton in
2019. I feel like he's done so much good for
00:07:23 the environment.
00:07:25 And I just think he will hopefully make some major changes
in a very good direction. Well, tell us a
00:07:30 little bit about the battle of Trenton. What was that
about? So the battle of Trenton. December
00:07:34 2019. Many of us remember it so well. We were there every
Monday and Thursday as the legislator's
00:07:39 net. We were there in January. We really were quite
frightened we would lose our religious
00:07:44 exemption. I sat in the assembly as I watched. Us move in
the assembly, and then we just continue to
00:07:51 show up and pray and know that. We weren't going away and
that we have this right and it should
00:07:57 never be taken. Away. And why is the religious exemption?
Why was that important to you? Well, we've
00:08:02 had it. So. Why should it be taken away? The timing was
also quite suspicious. But I'm an educator.
00:08:09 And my own children would have been threatened with
potential being kicked out of school. Right. So
00:08:15 we should always know what's going on our bodies, and we
should always have that choice, and. We
00:08:19 have it now and then. We thank him for that. Thank you,
Joe. William Hasham. William. And why are
00:08:23 you here today? I'm here to support Kennedy because I
think that he's the most qualified person to
00:08:28 be involved in American health. Why do you think that? I
think that because.
00:08:33 Of his lifetime research. My lifetime as an
environmentalist was going to say, oh, well, he should.
00:08:37 Be environmental, he should be EPA, whatever. But
basically.
00:08:41 He's really focused on how.
00:08:44 America's health is what we eat with, what food we grow
with.
00:08:48 How it's sold. Most of what medicine is putting our body,
all the chemicals within our body that
00:08:51 that directly determines.
00:08:54 Whether we live or die or we live healthily or badly. And
I think that he really wants to get the
00:08:58 corporate inputs out of it. We're not just like guinea
pigs, you pump chemicals in to make money out
00:09:02 of. Great. That's actually about our health. Where are you
from? Lillian. I'm from Manassa,

00:09:06 Virginia. From Virginia. Yes. Thank you. So, Melissa, welcome. Thank you. What's your name? How are
00:09:11 you? Melissa Bordeaux. And tell me why you're? Here. I'm here to support Bobby.
00:09:17 I've been an activist and an advocate for many years, and it's just a culmination of all of our hard
00:09:22 work, and I couldn't be more honored to be here to support him today. And did you start your
00:09:27 activism in New York? I did. I'm from New York.
00:09:31 Back in 2016.
00:09:33 My daughter.
00:09:35 It started my activism. My daughter was injured from her childhood vaccines, and it just became, we
00:09:43 started. Going up to Albany. All of the mothers would get together and lobby our legislators, and
00:09:49 then I. Became involved with children's health. Children's health defense. And then I ended up
00:09:55 working for the chapters department of Children's Health defense and. I will be an advocate for
00:10:00 life. Do you still live in New York? No, I ended up. Moving to Florida. Why was that? Freedom.
00:10:05 Florida. My children were no longer allowed to have a free and public education in the state of New
00:10:11 York due to the repeal of the religious exemption in 2019. Yes. Well, thanks for being here. Yes.
00:10:17 Good to see you, Melissa. Thank you. Thank you. Mandy. Fine. And what brings you here today? So I'm
00:10:22 here to support RP Jr.
00:10:25 Specifically because of the work that he has done, obviously, for military children. KAT and I are
00:10:30 both military families. I'm still serving on active duty.
00:10:35 DHD military chapter actually reached out to me a year ago and asked if I would do this for their
00:10:40 podcast, and it's been super supportive to me. I met you at the conference this summer, and then I
00:10:45 actually spoke on the Veterans Day panel, that CHC military chapter. Hosted. And here's the deal.
00:10:50 Kat and I are here because 93,000 people were poisoned when jet fuel leak can start drinking water.
00:10:55 System. Wait, say that again. When JP five jet fuel leaked into our drinking water system.
00:11:00 Where? In Hawaii. Okay. Poison 93,000 people. Military and civilian families alike. My one and
00:11:05 three. Year old children.

00:11:07 Were poisoned. And so we have an invested interest in prioritizing the health and safety of our

00:11:12 children. And we know that the same priority for RFP junior Stephanie Maher is welcome. How are you?

00:11:17 I'm great.

00:11:18 Tell us, why are you here today? Well, it's the culmination of years.

00:11:23 Of struggle. And I was crying earlier today with Melissa because.

00:11:28 Each one of us feels like.

00:11:30 I'm the one. I'm the one that did this. I went here. I went. There, I did this. And then I look at

00:11:36 someone like Melissa that picks up her whole entire life and moved to Florida because her children

00:11:40 were thrown out of school and they didn't. Even have a water fountain in a school to drink from.

00:11:46 They were literally outcast, and I just.

00:11:50 Have such amazing love for this movement. The women I've met. Everyone's so different. Everyone is a

00:11:57 different personality and yet they're such camaraderie and there's. Such spirit of hope, and I feel

00:12:03 like Bobby.

00:12:06 Has really taken us to a place where. He's reaching out his hands through the worst odds, through

00:12:11 being called every name in the book and saying, as humans, we need to come together to make a better

00:12:16 earth for our children.

00:12:19 So for me, that's everything. And I just feel like this is the most epic day. That just to be here.

00:12:26 Wow. What an experience. I love it. And I love you, Mary, because you have done just so. Many things

00:12:33 for so many years. Quietly and with the most humble spirit. And I love that about you. Thank you,

00:12:39 Stephanie. Great to see you.

00:12:48 Have been accessible to members and staff on both sides of the aisle. And have demonstrated strong

00:12:54 commitment to fulfilling the responsibilities of this role.

00:12:59 The Department of Health and Human Services oversees our nation's largest healthcare programs.

00:13:05 Providing coverage for nearly two in every five Americans.

00:13:10 Improving Medicare, Medicaid, and Chip, among other initiatives, presents challenges, especially in

00:13:16 the face of a rapidly aging population, stubbornly high costs, and persistent barriers to access.

00:13:25 However, this also provides us an opportunity to live, to deliver bold, transformative solutions.

00:13:32 As a committee, we share a commitment to advancing common sense, bipartisan policies that improve

00:13:38 the delivery of healthcare in this country.

00:13:42 This committee has worked to realign incentives in the prescription drug supply chain.

00:13:48 To enhance access in rural communities, to expand the availability of telehealth and improve the

00:13:54 broken clinician payment structure.

00:13:57 Across these and other issues. I look forward to working with the administration to continue

00:14:02 pursuing meaningful reforms. That serve the american people. More effectively and more efficiently.

00:14:10 Too often, patients encounter a health care system that is disjointed and is a dysfunctional maze.

00:14:17 Complex and bureaucratic shoots and ladders have become the norm.

00:14:22 Meanwhile, even as healthcare spending climbs, outcomes across a range of conditions continue to

00:14:28 decline.

00:14:30 Mr. Kennedy, if confirmed, you will have the opportunity to chart a new and better course for the

00:14:36 federal approach to tackling both the drivers and the consequences of our ailing healthcare system.

00:14:43 Your commitment to combating chronic conditions that drive health care costs will be critical to our

00:14:49 success.

00:14:51 Prioritizing disease prevention and addressing the factors that fuel conditions such as diabetes.

00:14:58 Cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, Alzheimer's disease, COPD and cancer will save lives,

00:15:06 reduce costs, and build a healthier, stronger country.

00:15:12 Private sector breakthroughs, from groundbreaking cancer medications to curative gene therapies,

00:15:17 also offer hope but misguided government initiatives and market.

00:15:23 Volatility risk eroding american leadership in life saving R and D.

00:15:30 Your advocacy for health care transparency has the potential to empower consumers across the

00:15:35 country. Promoting competition to enhance quality while cutting excessive spending for patients and

00:15:42 for taxpayers.

00:15:44 Today's hearing will provide a forum to hear more about
your vision, particularly for the federal
00:15:50 programs under this committee's jurisdiction.
00:15:53 Mr. Kennedy, you represent a voice for an inspiring
coalition of Americans who are deeply committed
00:15:59 to improving the health and well being of our nation.
00:16:04 Regardless of political party. Everyone in this room
shares a common recognition that our current
00:16:10 system has fallen short. As well as a common desire to
make our country healthier. I look forward to
00:16:17 today's conversation as well as your testimony, Mr.
Kennedy. And now I recognize Senator Wyden for
00:16:23 his opening remarks. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.
00:16:28 The question before the finance committee this morning is
whether Robert F. Kennedy should be
00:16:33 trusted with the health and well being of the american
people. Committee staff have examined
00:16:41 thousands of pages, statements, books and podcast
transcripts. In a review of his record.
00:16:50 The receipts show that Mr. Kennedy has embraced conspiracy
theories. Quacks. Charlatans. Especially
00:17:01 when it comes to the safety and efficacy of vaccines. He
has made it his life's work to sow doubt
00:17:11 and discourage parents from getting their kids life saving
vaccines.
00:17:18 It has been lucrative for him. And put him on the verge.
Of immense power.
00:17:25 This is the profile of someone who chases money.
00:17:30 And influence wherever they lead.
00:17:33 Even if that may mean the tragic deaths of children.
00:17:38 And other vulnerable people. Now, Mr. Kennedy is fond of
saying he's not making recommendations.
00:17:46 About whether parents should vaccinate their children.
00:17:49 He's just asking questions and giving people choices.
00:17:54 It's a slippery tactic to dodge any real responsibility
for his words and actions.
00:18:02 And it is, in my view, absurd coming from somebody who's
trying to win confirmation for a job. That
00:18:09 is entirely. About making recommendations.
00:18:14 These recommendations are going to have life or death
consequences for the american people. Mr.
00:18:21 Kennedy, if you are confirmed, your recommendations
determine which vaccines senior citizens get for
00:18:28 free through Medicare.

00:18:32 Your recommendation. Will determine which vaccines are given to millions of kids.

00:18:38 Pedaling these anti vaccine conspiracy theories. As our chief health officer, is going to endanger

00:18:45 the lives of kids and seniors across the nation.

00:18:50 Just look at what happened when Mr. Kennedy inserted himself into an anti vaccination crisis. In the

00:18:59 island nation of Samoa. He traveled near himself to push his views and pour fuel on the fire of a

00:19:06 measles. Outbreak that began due to low vaccination rates.

00:19:13 In the end, 83 Samoans died, mostly kids, from a disease that is easily preventable.

00:19:23 Americans cannot afford to import.

00:19:27 This experiment. To our great nation.

00:19:31 Another health care matters, from abortion to universal healthcare. Mr. Kennedy has changed his

00:19:35 views so often it is nearly impossible to know where he stands. On so many of the basic issues that

00:19:43 impact.

00:19:46 Americans Daily lives.

00:19:49 In a Gob smacking statement of irresponsibility. In November 2023, Mr. Kennedy said that he wanted

00:19:58 to pause. Infectious disease research.

00:20:04 For eight years. Mr. Kennedy has indicated he's open to restricting access to the abortion

00:20:11 medication MIFA pristine. Which remains a primary target of the republican crusade against

00:20:16 reproductive freedom. I took this on back in 1990, when I chaired the first congressional hearing on

00:20:22 the topic. The science was clear then. It's even. Clearer today.

00:20:28 Mephipristone is safe. The only reason it's under question in 2025. Is because people with a

00:20:33 political agenda.

00:20:35 Have been outlying about it. Women deserve to know if Mr. Kennedy will abuse his power as our

00:20:40 country's chief health officer to essentially implement a national abortion ban by restricting

00:20:48 access to the safe and legal medication. Meanwhile, as the Trump Budget office threw the Medicaid

00:20:55 program. Into chaos yesterday. Republicans in Congress are proposing deep cuts to the program that

00:21:02 will rip away health care from millions of Americans who count on this vital lifeline.

00:21:08 Cuts to Medicaid at this magnitude are going to jack up the cost of health insurance.

00:21:13 It'll shutter nursing homes and rural hospitals, deprived seniors and Americans with disabilities of

00:21:19 home based care. That approach amounts to handing over our nation's health system to for profit

00:21:26 insurance companies.

00:21:29 Who've made a fortune delaying and denying care.

00:21:33 Mr. Kennedy has virtually no knowledge or experience in handling these issues.

00:21:38 It leaves him unprepared to take on a crisis like the nation witnessed yesterday, when the Trump

00:21:43 Budget office shut down the federal Medicaid payment portal.

00:21:49 After a careful review of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Statements, actions and views, materials that I

00:21:57 have reviewed personally and closely. I reached the conclusion that he should not be entrusted with

00:22:03 the health and well being of the american people when he's taken every side of every issue. How can

00:22:11 this committee and the american people believe. He has anything to say. Let me close by saying I

00:22:17 believe more strongly than ever.

00:22:21 And I have specialized in health care. During my time in public service, there were a turning point.

00:22:27 With regard to healthcare in America, there's one word to describe american feelings towards the

00:22:33 health care system. It's disillusioned at every single turn. People feel like they're. Rolling a

00:22:39 load.

00:22:41 Of dice. Loaded dice when they try to get health care. Americans are justifiably angry, fed up and

00:22:47 tired of a system that puts profits over patients.

00:22:51 Instead of debating meaningful ways to improve Americans health care, now the committee is being

00:22:57 forced to relitigate settled science about vaccines and whether or not the federal government should

00:23:03 help Americans get affordable health care. I know where Democrats on this finance committee stand

00:23:10 when it comes to an agenda to lower costs. And improve care.

00:23:16 I must say.

00:23:17 I cannot say the same about the nominee sitting in front of me and.

00:23:23 Let me acknowledge finally, Mr. Chairman, Terry Mills from
Portland, Oregon, who is here to
00:23:28 represent nurses for America, and I'd like to enter a
statement from her organization into the
00:23:33 record at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Without
objection.
00:23:37 Thank you. Thank you, ranking member Wyden. Mr. Kennedy,
in a few moments you will be given the
00:23:43 opportunity to make your opening statement and respond to
these attacks and other questions.
00:23:49 The members of this committee have.
00:23:51 I would say that with regard to the attack on Medicaid
that we just heard that was a false attack.
00:23:57 It's been proven false. Overnight. The Medicaid portal is
operating. Efficiently today and was never
00:24:03 intended to be shut down. Would gentlemen yield? Since
he's mentioned. My name. There was a
00:24:08 significant amount of time yesterday where there was bed.
Bedlam across the country over the status
00:24:14 of the Medicaid portals. I hope it's. Being corrected, but
there were problems all through the day.
00:24:20 There certainly were attacks yesterday. The problem has
been clarified and the Medicaid portal is
00:24:26 fully operational as we speak.
00:24:30 Mr. Kennedy, before I turn the time over to you to share
your opening statement, I would like to
00:24:35 give you a brief introduction.
00:24:38 The son of Senator Robert F. Kennedy and nephew of
President John F. Kennedy. Robert Kennedy Jr. Has
00:24:45 been an advocate for consumers since 1985. After
graduating from Harvard University, Mr. Kennedy
00:24:53 studied at the London School of Economics and received his
law degree from the. University of
00:24:58 Virginia Law School and a master's degree in environmental
law from Pace University. He has founded
00:25:05 two advocacy groups and has spent the last 40 years
working to restore and protect children's
00:25:11 health. He was a former independent candidate in the 2024
presidential election. And.
00:25:21 President.
00:25:22 Trump nominated him this year to be.
00:25:26 In November. Of 2024 to be the HHS secretary.
00:25:33 In announcing his nomination, President Trump stated, Mr.
Kennedy will restore these agencies to the

00:25:39 traditions of gold. Standard scientific research and
beacons of transparency and end the chronic
00:25:47 disease epidemic and make America great. And healthy
again.
00:25:54 Before you give your opening statement, Mr. Kennedy, I
have four obligatory questions that we ask
00:25:58 all nominees. Before this committee.
00:26:02 First, is there anything that you are aware of in your
background that might present a conflict of
00:26:06 interest with the duties of the office to which you have
been nominated.
00:26:11 No, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Do you know of any reason,
personal or otherwise, that would in any way
00:26:19 prevent you from fully and honorably discharging the
responsibilities of the office to which you
00:26:24 have been nominated. No, I do not.
00:26:27 Do you agree, without reservation, to respond to any
reasonable summons, to appear and testify
00:26:34 before any duly. Constituted committee of Congress if you
are confirmed? Yes, I do. And finally, do
00:26:40 you commit to providing a prompt response in writing to
any questions addressed to you by any
00:26:45 senator of this committee? Yes. I do thank you, Mr.
Kennedy. And before you begin, if you would like
00:26:51 to, you may introduce. Your wife and children.
00:26:59 My daughter Kick Kennedy, my son, Bobby Kennedy.
00:27:03 His wife, Amarillas Fox Kennedy.
00:27:07 And my nephew, Jackson Hines is here, too. We welcome you
all. Thank you. You may proceed with your
00:27:13 statement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
00:27:17 Chairman grape.
00:27:19 Wyden and members of this distinguished committee. I'm
humbled to be sitting here. As President
00:27:26 Trump's nominee. Oversee the us department of health and
human services.
00:27:32 I want to thank President Trump for entrusting me to
deliver on his promise to make America healthy
00:27:38 again.
00:27:40 I also want to thank Cheryl and Kick and Bobby and all my
other children.
00:27:46 Who are here today and all the many members of my large
extended family for the love that they have
00:27:53 so generously shared.
00:27:56 Ours has always been a family that has been involved in
public service, and I look forward to

00:28:02 continuing that tradition.

00:28:04 My journey into the issue of health began with my career as an environmental attorney working with

00:28:11 hunters. And fishermen and mothers. In the small town in Odson valley and along the Hudson River.

00:28:19 I learned very early on that human health.

00:28:23 And environmental injuries are intertwined. The same chemicals that kill fish make people sick.

00:28:32 Also. Today, Americans overall health is in grievous condition. Over 70% of adults and a third of

00:28:39 children are overweight or obese.

00:28:43 Diabetes is ten times more prevalent than it was during the 1960s. Cancer among young people is

00:28:49 rising. By one or 2% a year.

00:28:53 Autoimmune diseases, neurodevelopmental disorders, Alzheimer's, asthma, ADHD.

00:29:00 Depression, addiction, and a host of other physical and mental health conditions are all on the

00:29:06 rise. Some of them exponentially.

00:29:10 The United States has worse health and any other developed nation, yet we spend more on health care

00:29:15 at least.

00:29:17 And in some cases triple as other countries. Last year, we spent 4.8 trillion, not counting the

00:29:24 indirect cost of missed work.

00:29:29 That's almost. A fifth of gdp. It's tantamount to a 20% tax on the entire economy.

00:29:37 No wonder America has trouble competing with countries that pay a third of what we do for health.

00:29:42 And have better outcomes and a healthier workforce.

00:29:47 I don't want to make this too much about money. It's the human tragedy. That moves us to care.

00:29:54 President Trump has promised to restore America's global strength and to restore the american dream.

00:29:59 But he understands.

00:30:02 We can't be a strong nation when our people are so sick.

00:30:07 A healthy person has a thousand dreams. A sick person has only one.

00:30:14 Today, over half of our countrymen and women are chronically ill.

00:30:19 When I met with President Trump last summer, I discovered that he is more than just concerned for

00:30:24 this tragic situation, but genuine care.

00:30:28 President Trump is committed to restoring the american dream, and 77 million Americans delivered a

00:30:34 mandate to him. To do just that.

00:30:38 Due in part to the embrace and elevation. Of the make America healthy and movement.

00:30:45 His movement, led largely by Maha moms from every state, and you can see many of them. Behind us

00:30:50 today and in the hallways and in the lobbies.

00:30:55 Is one of the most transcendent and powerful movements I've ever seen.

00:31:00 I promise President Trump that if confirmed, I will do everything in my power.

00:31:05 To put the health of Americans back on track.

00:31:09 And I've been greatly heartened to discover a deep level of care among members of this committee to

00:31:14 both Democrats and Republicans. I came away from our conversations confident that we can put aside

00:31:20 our divisions for the sake of healthy America.

00:31:25 For a long time, the nation has been locked in a divisive healthcare debate about who pays. When

00:31:32 healthcare cost reached 20%. There are no good options, only bad ones.

00:31:39 Shifting the burden around between government and corporations and insurers and providers and

00:31:45 families is like rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

00:31:50 Our country will sink beneath a sea of desperation and debt.

00:31:55 If we don't change the course and ask why are health care costs so high in the first place.

00:32:02 The obvious answer is chronic disease.

00:32:05 Says 90% of health care spending goes toward managing chronic disease, which. Hits lower income

00:32:13 Americans the hardest.

00:32:15 The president's pledge is not to make some Americans happy again.

00:32:20 Healthy again, but to make all of our people healthy again.

00:32:24 There is no single culprit and chronic disease. Much as I have criticized certain industries and

00:32:30 agencies.

00:32:32 President Trump. And I understand that most of their scientists and experts genuinely care about

00:32:37 american health.

00:32:39 Therefore, we will bring together all stakeholders in pursuit of this unifying goal.

00:32:46 Before I conclude, I want to make sure the committee is clear about a few things. News reports have

00:32:52 claimed that I am anti vaccine or any industry. I am
neither.

00:32:57 I am pro safety.

00:33:09 We'll have order.

00:33:13 Please proceed, Mr. Kennedy. I am pro safety. I work for
years to raise awareness about the mercury.

00:33:21 And toxic chemicals and fish, and nobody called me any
fish.

00:33:27 And I believe.

00:33:30 That. Vaccines play a critical role in healthcare. All of
my kids are vaccinated. I've written many

00:33:36 books on vaccines. My first book in 2014.

00:33:41 The first line of it is, I am not antivaccine. And the
last line is, I. Am not any vaccine.

00:33:48 Or I'm the enemy of food producers. American farms are the
bedrock of our culture, of our politics

00:33:54 of our national security.

00:33:56 I was a four h kid, and I spent my summer working on
ranches.

00:34:01 I went to work with our farmers. I want to work with our
farmers and food producers.

00:34:07 Remove burdensome regulations and unleash american
ingenuity.

00:34:12 I simply cannot succeed without a partnership. Full
partnership of american farmers.

00:34:21 In my advocacy.

00:34:24 I've often disturbed the status quo. By asking
uncomfortable questions.

00:34:29 Well, I'm not going to apologize for that. We have massive
health problems in this country. That we

00:34:34 must face honestly. And the first thing I've done every
morning for the past 20 years. Is to get on

00:34:42 my knees and pray to God that he would put me in a
position. To end the chronic disease epidemic and

00:34:49 to help America's children.

00:34:52 That's why I'm so grateful to President Trump.

00:34:56 The opportunity to sit before you today and seek your
support and partnership in this endeavor.

00:35:04 I will conclude with a promise.

00:35:06 The members of this committee to the president.

00:35:09 And to all the tens of billions of parents across America,
especially the moms.

00:35:15 Who propelled this issue to center stage. Should I be so
privileged as to be confirmed, we will.

00:35:21 Make sure our tax dollars support healthy foods.

00:35:27 We will scrutinize the chemical additives in our food supply. We will remove financial conflicts of
00:35:32 interest from our agencies. We will create an honest, unbiased, gold standard science at HHS,
00:35:40 accountable to the president.
00:35:43 To Congress and to the American people. We will reverse the chronic disease epidemic and put the
00:35:49 nation back on the road to good health. Thank you.
00:35:54 Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Kennedy, I will begin. Each of us will have five minutes to ask you
00:36:01 questions, and then. At the conclusion of the hearing. If there are further questions, there will be
00:36:06 an opportunity for those questions to be submitted to you, and I ask that you respond to them
00:36:10 promptly.
00:36:12 Mr. Kennedy, you have emphasized the importance of nutrition in preventing and managing chronic
00:36:18 disease, improving health outcomes. And reducing health costs. I share your interest in the
00:36:25 relationship between our diet and our well being. And if confirmed, I look forward to partnering
00:36:31 with you on those efforts. Would you share with the committee why you are passionate about the
00:36:36 nutrition oriented disease prevention and what you have learned. Yes, Mr. Chairman.
00:36:44 I had eleven brothers and sisters. I had dozens of first cousins.
00:36:49 I was raised in a time where we did not have a chronic disease epidemic. My uncle was president, 2%
00:36:55 of American kids had chronic disease.
00:36:59 Today. 66% have chronic disease. We spent zero on chronic disease during the Kennedy administration.
00:37:05 Today we.
00:37:07 Spend \$4.3 trillion a year.
00:37:11 With 77% of our kids.
00:37:14 Cannot qualify for military service. When I was a kid, the typical pediatrician would see one case.
00:37:21 Of diabetes in his or her lifetime. 40 or 50 year career.
00:37:27 A one out of every three kids who walks to his office or is diabetic or prediabetic, and the most
00:37:33 recent data from NIH shows 38% of genes are diabetic or pre diabetic autism rates have gone from one
00:37:41 in 10,000 to one in 1500, depending on what studies you look at. In my generation today. 70 year
00:37:48 old. Men. One in 34 in my kids generation.

00:37:53 We've seen. This explosion of autoimmune disease, of allergic diseases.

00:37:59 This is not just.

00:38:02 An economic issue. It's not just a national security issue. It is a spiritual issue, and it is a

00:38:07 moral issue we cannot live up.

00:38:11 To our role as an exemplary nation, as a moral authority around the world. And we're writing off an

00:38:16 entire generation of kids. Thank you very much. And if confirm, how could we work together to

00:38:23 integrate nutrition based interventions into our healthcare programs like Medicaid and Medicare.

00:38:30 Well. There are many ways that we can do that.

00:38:35 A federal funding of the SNaP program, for example, and of school lunch programs.

00:38:42 Could be a driver for helping kids. We shouldn't be giving 60% of the kids. In school.

00:38:48 Processed food that is making them sick.

00:38:51 We shouldn't be spending 10% of the Snap program.

00:38:55 On sugar drinks, so we have a direct.

00:38:59 Ability to change things there.

00:39:04 In Medicaid and Medicare. We need to focus more on outcome based medicine. On putting people in

00:39:11 charge of their own health care.

00:39:13 Making them accountable for their own health care so they understand the relationship between.

00:39:19 Eating and getting sick. Most importantly, we need to use deploy NIH.

00:39:26 NFDA to doing the research to understand the relationship between these different food additives.

00:39:32 And chronic disease so that Americans understand it and make sure that Americans are away. But I

00:39:37 don't want to take food away from anybody, if you like.

00:39:43 A McDonald's cheeseburger or Diet Coke, which my boss loves.

00:39:48 And you should be able to get them. If you want to eat hostess winkies, you should be able to do

00:39:53 that, but you should know what the impacts are on your family and on your health.

00:39:59 Thank you, Senator Wyden. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Before I begin my questions, I'd like

00:40:05 to start by entering into the record a letter of the committee received from Ambassador Carolyn

00:40:10 Kennedy, outlining what she believes is Mr. Kennedy's lack of personal fitness for the office

00:40:15 without objection. Mr. Kennedy.

00:40:19 You have spent years pushing. Conflicting stories about vaccines. You say one thing and then you say

00:40:27 another.

00:40:28 Your testimony today under oath, you denied that you were anti vaccine, but during. A podcast

00:40:34 interview in July of 2023, you said, quote, no vaccine is safe and effective in your testimony today

00:40:42 in order to prove. You're not antivax. You note that all your kids are vaccinated, but. In a podcast

00:40:50 in 2020, you said, and I quote, you would do anything, pay anything to go back in time and not

00:40:59 vaccinate your kids? Mr. Kennedy, all of these things. Cannot be true.

00:41:07 So are you lying to congress today when you say you are pro vaccine or did you lie? On all those

00:41:15 podcasts. We have all of this on tape, by the way.

00:41:19 Senator, as you know.

00:41:22 Because it's been repeatedly debunked. That statement that I made on the lack of Freedman podcast

00:41:27 was a fragment of the statement. He asked me and anybody who actually goes and looks at that

00:41:33 podcast. And we'll see this. He asked me, are there vaccines that are save in effect and I said to

00:41:40 him, some of the live irish vaccines are. And I said, there are no vaccines. That are safe and

00:41:46 effective. And I was going to continue for every person, every medicine has people who are sensitive

00:41:52 to them, including vaccines. So he interrupted me at that point. I've corrected it many times,

00:42:00 including on national tv. You know about Senator White and so. Bringing this up right now is

00:42:05 dishonest. Let's be clear about what. You've actually done then, since you want to deny your

00:42:12 statements, for example. You have a history. Of trying to take vaccines away from people. In May of

00:42:20 2021, you petitioned the food and drug administration to not only block Americans from having access

00:42:28 to the Covid vaccine, but to prevent any future access to the life saving vaccine. Are you denying

00:42:35 that your. Name is on the petition.

00:42:39 We brought that petition after.

00:42:43 Cdc recommended Covid vaccine without any scientific.

00:42:49 Basis or six year old children. Most experts agree. Today, even the people who did it back then.

00:42:57 At Covid vaccines are inappropriate for six year old children, who basically have a zero risk from
00:43:04 Covid. That's why I brought that lawsuit.
00:43:08 Mr Kennedy.
00:43:19 The committee will be in order.
00:43:22 And to the audience.
00:43:26 Senator, I'm not against. Hold off for a second. Mr. Kennedy, to the audience.
00:43:31 Comments from the audience are inappropriate and out of order, and if there are any further
00:43:36 disruptions. The committee will recess until the police can restore order. Please follow the rules
00:43:43 of the committee. Mr. Kennedy, you may proceed. I also want to point out. That your hesitation of
00:43:51 what happened in Samuela is absolutely wrong.
00:43:56 We'll get to that in a moment. Right now we're talking about the petition. That you filed to block
00:44:02 Americans from having access to the vaccine and to prevent any future access. To the vaccine. Those
00:44:09 facts are on the record. My third question to you. Is you made almost \$5 million from book deals,
00:44:17 mostly promoting junk science. In 2021, in a book called the measles book. You wrote that parents
00:44:23 had been, quote, misled into believing that measles is a deadly disease and that measles vaccines are
00:44:29 necessary, safe and effective. The reality is measles. Are, in fact, deadly and highly contagious.
00:44:35 Something that you should have learned after your lives. Contributed to the deaths of 83 people,
00:44:41 most of them children, in a measles outbreak in Samoa. So my question here is, Mr. Kennedy, is
00:44:48 measles deadly, yes or no?
00:44:52 The death rate from measles historically in this country.
00:44:56 In 1963. Before the introduction to the vaccine was one in 10,000. Let me explain what happened in
00:45:04 Samoa. Samoa.
00:45:08 In 2000 and. 15. There were two kids who died following the MMR vaccine.
00:45:16 And the vaccination raisins amoa dropped precipitously from about 63% to the mid 30s, so they've
00:45:22 never been very high.
00:45:24 And in 2018, two more kids died following the MMR vaccine, and the government Samawa banned the MmR
00:45:31 vaccine.
00:45:33 I arrived a year later on vaccination rates were already.

00:45:37 Below.

00:45:39 Any previous level.

00:45:41 I went there. Nothing to do with vaccines. I went there to introduce a medical informatic system.

00:45:47 I would digitalize records in Samoa and make health delivery much more efficient.

00:45:53 I never gave any public statement about vaccines. You cannot.

00:45:58 Find. A single Samoan who will say, I didn't get a vaccine because of Bobby Kennedy.

00:46:04 I went in June of 2019. The measles house break started in August.

00:46:10 Oh, clearly I had nothing to do with the measles. Not only that, Mr. Kennedy.

00:46:14 If you let me finish. You have had some time. If you haven't finished.

00:46:21 83 people died. When tissues apples were sent to New Zealand.

00:46:28 Not. Most of those people did not have measles. We don't know what was. Killing them.

00:46:33 The same outbreak occurred in Tonga and Fiji, and no extra people died. There were seven measles.

00:46:38 Outbreaks in the 13 years prior to. Get my time back.

00:46:44 The nominee wrote a book saying that people had been misled into believing that measles is a deadly

00:46:50 disease. He's trying now to play down his role in samoa. That's. Not what the parents say. That's

00:46:55 not what Governor Green says. It's time. To make sure that we blow the whistle on actually what your

00:47:00 views are. At least we're starting. We need to move. I support the measles vaccine. I support the

00:47:07 polio vaccine. I will do nothing as HHS secretary. That makes it difficult or discourages people

00:47:14 from taking. Anybody who believes that on a look at the measles book you wrote saying parents have

00:47:20 been misled into believing that measles was a deadly disease. That's not true. We need to move on

00:47:26 Senator grassley.

00:47:28 Welcome.

00:47:32 I'm going to do like I did in my office. I'm just going to make some points to you. I got about

00:47:38 seven I want to quickly get done.

00:47:41 And then at the end, I'm going to ask if you disagree with anything I say. And then address those

00:47:47 things you disagree with.

00:47:50 I'll make sure I save time for you to do that.

00:47:53 A key responsibility of each member of Congress is oversight. Oversight allows us to hold

00:47:59 bureaucrats accountable. To the rule of law, and it helps keep faith with taxpayers. I expect HHS to

00:48:06 provide timely and complete responses to congressional oversight. Number two.

00:48:13 Pbl. Something you and I discussed in our office. I've been working to hold pharmacy. Benefit

00:48:19 managers accountable in order to lower prescription drug prices. I expect you to work with us.

00:48:27 To hold pbms accountable, and that may even ask in your support for legislation that's. Before the

00:48:34 congress.

00:48:36 Drug pricing. Senator Durban and I have for a while been trying to get a bill pass that requires

00:48:43 price disclosures on tv ads for prescription drugs. Knowing what something costs before buying it is

00:48:51 just common sense. President Trump tried to do this by. Regulation in his first term. Vice President

00:48:59 Vance co sponsored our bail last Congress. I ask you to support this bill.

00:49:06 Or if you can do it by regulation, to do it by regulation.

00:49:11 On rural health care. The previous administration dragged his feet and opening up slots for rural

00:49:18 community hospital demonstration programs. It also ignored concerns from rural pharmacies. When

00:49:25 implementing changes to Medicare Part D and ignored rural needs when it comes to distributing

00:49:32 physician.

00:49:34 Residency slots. I expect you to prioritize rural Americans health care needs.

00:49:41 On agriculture. In our meeting earlier this month, we talked at length about agriculture. You

00:49:47 preface the conversation by saying you will not have jurisdiction over these issues. I expect you to

00:49:53 leave agricultural practice regulations to the proper agencies. And for the most part, that's USDA

00:50:01 and EPA.

00:50:04 On dietary guidelines. I've sent letters to the secretaries of agriculture, HHS, requesting that

00:50:12 they provide information regarding conflicts of interest on the Dietary Guideline Advisory Committee

00:50:20 to increase transparency, I expect you to provide Congress with confidential financial. Disclosures

00:50:27 from the advisory committee before finalizing dietary
guidelines. So we know that nobody has a
00:50:35 vested interest in it is having. Undue influence. Lastly.
00:50:42 HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement Oversight. Last year, I
expanded my investigation into HHS's.
00:50:52 Office of Refugee resettlement.
00:50:56 I wrote two dozen contractors and grantees whose job it is
to place unaccompanied children with
00:51:02 sponsors. In many cases, children have been placed with
improper vented sponsors, placing them at
00:51:11 risk of trafficking. The Biden administration's HHS
directed these taxpayer funded contractors and
00:51:20 grantees to not respond to my inqu? Inquiry. This is
obstruction by the executive branch. I expect
00:51:29 you to produce to me the records and data. I've requested
and instruct HHS contractors to fully
00:51:37 cooperate with my investigation. I also expect hhs to not
retaliate against any whistleblowers,
00:51:45 including those. Who identify.
00:51:54 You got 45 seconds of responding.
00:51:58 I agree with all of those provisions, senator.
00:52:04 My approach.
00:52:07 To. Administration. HHS will be radical transparency. If
members of this committee or other members
00:52:13 of Congress want information, the doors are open.
00:52:18 I've spent many years litigating against NIH and its sub
agencies.
00:52:23 Hhs.
00:52:25 And its sub agencies, NIHDC, FDA, on FOIA issues, trying
to get information that we the taxpayers
00:52:32 paid for, and oftentimes getting redacted copies after a
year or two. Years of litigation, that
00:52:39 should not be the case. And if Congress asked me for
information, you will. Get it immediately.
00:52:45 Thank. You. Thank you. Senator Cantwell is next, but until
she returns, I will move on to. Down the
00:52:51 list. And that would be? Senator Cornyn. Mr. Kennedy,
welcome to you and your family. And
00:52:56 congratulations. I appreciate Senator Grassley raising the
issue of the Office of Refugee
00:53:03 resettlement within the auspices. Of health and human
services. I think this may surprise people,
00:53:09 but that's actually the responsibility. Of HHS, the Office
of resettlement relocation under the

00:53:15 previous administration. As Senator Grassley alluded there were roughly 500,000 children,

00:53:22 unaccompanied minors that were placed with sponsors in the Interior of the United States. The

00:53:28 previous administration took the position that it was not the federal government's. Responsibility

00:53:33 once these children were placed with these sponsors. But the New York Times and a series of

00:53:39 investigative stories pointed out that tens of thousands of these children. When they tried to

00:53:46 follow up and find out how they were doing, whether they were going to school, whether they were

00:53:50 being trafficked or abused.

00:53:54 There was no answer, and they took the position. It was not their responsibility. So I look forward.

00:53:58 To working with you. To find those children and to make sure that they're not being abused.

00:54:07 Millions of Americans are experiencing. Mild to moderate mental health and substance abuse issues,

00:54:15 yet many struggle with timely and effective access.

00:54:19 Primary care physicians are most likely to be seeing these individuals as opposed to a specialist,

00:54:25 and it makes it important that these individuals primary care physicians be trained in patient

00:54:30 centered care, which would strengthen the integration of behavioral health care with primary care

00:54:37 services. Is this something.

00:54:39 That. You are concerned about something you'd be willing to work with us on in order to implement.

00:54:45 Yes.

00:54:48 I reassure you that President Trump has personally spoken to me.

00:54:53 About locating those 300,000 children who disappeared over the last four years. I don't. Think

00:54:58 anybody has that fully accurate number, but it's hundreds of thousands. I agree. And many of them we

00:55:03 know have insects, traffic and childhood slavery.

00:55:09 And. It is a blight on America's moral authority, and we need to find those kids.

00:55:15 In terms of.

00:55:18 Addiction services.

00:55:23 This is a priority for me. It was a priority for me when I was running for president. During my

00:55:28 campaign. I was a heroin addict for 14 years. And 42 years in recovery. I go to twelve seven

00:55:35 meetings every day. So I hear the stories. Every day. And I hear that many stories.

00:55:42 About denial.

00:55:44 Or the barriers to access the care, and we need to improve that and answer specifically to your

00:55:50 question. I think we can do that through GMA.

00:55:55 Which is.

00:55:57 A program that is funded by HHS.

00:56:01 That is the largest funder.

00:56:04 For medical school students.

00:56:08 And that's one of the things for primary care physicians should understand, addiction care.

00:56:16 Addicts. Almost always go through a cycle.

00:56:19 Where there is a moment with a hit. Periodic bottoms.

00:56:24 Where they're ready to go into treatment, but it's fleeting and it's. Momentary. And we have that

00:56:30 opportunity to save their lives. And then if we miss that little short window, they're off to the

00:56:35 raises again.

00:56:38 I appreciate your answer. Our time is short. Let me get to one more question.

00:56:43 That I think is very important under the first Trump administration, the number of people receiving

00:56:50 HIV treatment in Africa through the President's emergency plan for age release, otherwise known as

00:56:56 PEP far it increased. This is during the first Trump administration, from 13 million people to 18

00:57:03 million. People across 50 countries, primarily in Africa. Africa has about 1.3 billion people today,

00:57:11 or in 2021 is projected to have. 2.5 billion people. By 2050, or 25% of the global population. In

00:57:22 2020, PEP? Pars reported that 2.8 million babies were born without HIV. That was something that

00:57:30 would not have happened but for the PEP far program. So it has simply been one of the most

00:57:36 successful public health programs in the world and saved approximately 26. Million lives. Failure to

00:57:45 continue this program, in my view, would risk seeding that leadership to adversaries. Like China.

00:57:51 And I'd like to know whether you support the objectives and goals of PEP. Par and would you work

00:57:56 with me and my colleagues to make sure that this program continues to provide life saving antiviral

00:58:03 drugs to. People who are most in need. I absolutely support that far.

00:58:10 And I will happily work with you to strengthen the program.

00:58:14 Thank you, Senator Bennett. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy, for being here this

00:58:18 morning.

00:58:20 And I think that, Mr. Chairman. We are truly through the licking glass this morning here.

00:58:28 In the US Senate and this committee is being asked to fulfill.

00:58:33 A really important responsibility, which is to decide whether to confirm Mr. Kennedy to one of the

00:58:38 most important health care jobs in America. And the reason I think it's so important is for many of

00:58:45 the reasons you said in your opening statement, which is that we live in the richest country in the

00:58:50 world, and we have some of the worst health out. Outcomes of any industrialized country in the

00:58:55 world. We live in the richest country in the world. And we have some of the lowest expect health.

00:59:03 Life expectancy rates of anybody in the industrialized world. I was a school superintendent before I

00:59:10 was in this job, Mr. Chairman, and I can tell you that Mr. Kennedy's right.

00:59:17 That when I look at the kids in the Denver public schools, if we don't change the way we eat in this

00:59:22 country, 40% of them are going to suffer. Adult.

00:59:28 Diabetes as a result.

00:59:31 Of their diet.

00:59:34 As I said, spending more than any other country in the world. And our families. Every single

00:59:40 person's constituents in this Senate are facing chronic shortages when it comes to health. Care, my

00:59:46 friend from Texas. Senator Cornyn has been a champion on mental health care. We have an epidemic, as

00:59:51 he knows. Across this country.

00:59:55 In mental health care, partly because of.

00:59:59 What?

01:00:02 The massive social media platforms that were sitting behind the president of the United States have

01:00:07 inflicted in our children for their profit in the last decade or so, so we have no shortage of

01:00:14 challenges. To confront, and I even agree with some of the diagnosis.

01:00:21 Of Mr. Kennedy. What? Is so disturbing to me is that out of 330,000,000 Americans were being asked

01:00:29 to put somebody in this job who has spent 50 years of his
life not honoring the tradition. That he
01:00:36 talked about. At the beginning of this conversation, but
peddling in half.
01:00:42 Crews pedaling in false statements. Pedaling?
01:00:47 In theories. That create doubt about whether or not things
that we know are safe are unsafe. Not
01:00:55 that every vaccine in America is unsafe. Not that you
can't possibly have an adverse reaction, but
01:01:02 that parents and children in my old school district and
school districts. All this country would be
01:01:07 better off. Not. Getting vaccinated than getting
vaccinated. Unlike his own children, who are
01:01:14 vaccinated unlike the people he invited to his house in
Los Angeles for their party, who were
01:01:20 vaccinated for everybody else. It's about peddling these
half truths, and he says it with such
01:01:26 conviction that you want to believe him.
01:01:30 And Mr. Kennedy. There are many, many things in the
record, but I hope that you could answer these
01:01:37 questions. Yes. Or no? I've tried to ask these in a manner
that's faithful. To what? You actually
01:01:43 said. Because I didn't want to have a debate about whether
you actually said them. So I'm asking
01:01:47 you, yes or no, Mr. Kennedy? Did you say that, Covid-19?
Was a genetically engineered bioweapon that
01:01:55 targets black and white people, but spared Ashkenazi. Jews
and chinese people.
01:02:01 I didn't say it was deliberately targeted.
01:02:04 I just quoted an nih funded an nih.
01:02:11 Published study. Did you say that it targets black and
white people, but spared.
01:02:17 I quoted. NIH study that showed. I'll take that as certain
ways. I have to move on. I have to move
01:02:24 on. Did you say that lyme disease.
01:02:28 Is highly likely a materially engineered bioweapon. I made
sure I put in the highly likely. Did you
01:02:35 say Lyme disease is a highly likely militarily engineered
bioweapon I probably did say that. Did you
01:02:43 say that?
01:02:46 I want all of our colleagues to hear it, Mr. Kennedy. I
want them to hear it. You said yes. Did you
01:02:52 say that exposure to pesticides causes children to become
transgender? No, I never said that. Okay,

01:02:59 I have the record that I'll give to the chairman. And he can make his judgment about what you said.

01:03:05 Did you write in your book? And it's undeniable.

01:03:09 That. African AIDs is an entirely different disease from western AIDs. Yes or no, Mr. Kennedy? I'm

01:03:16 not sure if I made. I'll give it to the chairman. Mr. Kennedy, and my final question. Did you say on

01:03:23 a podcast, and I quote, I wouldn't leave it abortion to the states. My belief is we should. Leave it

01:03:31 to the woman. We shouldn't have the government involved, even if it's. Full term. Did you say that,

01:03:37 Mr. Senator. I believe every abortion is a tragedy. Did you say it, Mr. Kennedy?

01:03:44 Matters. It doesn't matter what you come here. And say that isn't true, that's not reflective of.

01:03:52 What you really believe that you haven't said over a decade after decade after decade because unlike

01:03:56 other jobs we're confirming around this place, this is a job where it is life. And death.

01:04:03 For the kids that I used to work for in the Denver public schools and for families all over this

01:04:08 country that are suffering from living in the richest country in the world that can't. Deliver basic

01:04:14 health care and basic mental health year to them. It's too important for the games that.

01:04:21 You're playing, Mr. Kennedy. And I hope my colleagues will say to the president, I have no influence

01:04:27 over him. I hope my colleagues will say to the president, out of 330,000,000 Americans. We can do

01:04:34 better than this. Thank you. We need to move on.

01:04:38 Senator cassidy. Mr. Kennedy, President Trump is sworn to protect Medicare. Republicans are

01:04:49 exploring reforms to Medicaid that could help pay for Trump administration priorities.

01:04:55 With this context, what will you do about dual eligibles?

01:05:00 About dual eligibles.

01:05:03 Well, dual eligibles are not, right now, served very well under the system.

01:05:09 Those are people who are eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare.

01:05:17 I suppose my answer to that is to make sure that.

01:05:22 The programs are consolidated.

01:05:26 They're integrated. The care is integrated. I look forward to working with you, Dr. Cassidy, on

01:05:31 making sure that we take good care of people.

01:05:37 How do you propose that we integrate those programs? Does Medicare pay more? Medicare pay less?

01:05:42 Medicaid. Pay more, Medicaid pay less. How do we do that?

01:05:48 I'm not exactly sure. Because I'm not in there. It is difficult to integrate. Them because.

01:05:55 Medicaid, Medicare is under fee for service is paid for.

01:06:00 By employer taxes, Medicaid.

01:06:05 Is fully paid for the federal government.

01:06:09 And it's not fever services.

01:06:14 I do not know the answer to that. I look forward to.

01:06:19 Exploring options with you.

01:06:22 Republicans again are looking at ways to potentially reform Medicaid to help.

01:06:28 Pay for President Trump's priorities, but to improve outcomes. What thoughts do you have regarding

01:06:33 Medicaid? Reform.

01:06:36 Medicaid is not working for Americans, and it's specifically not working.

01:06:42 Or the target population. Most Americans, like myself, I'm on Medicare Advantage and I'm very happy

01:06:48 with it. Most people who are unmedicate are not happy. The premiums are too high. The deductibles

01:06:53 are too high.

01:06:56 The networks are narrow. The best.

01:06:59 Doctors will not accept it in the best hospitals.

01:07:03 And particularly Medicaid, was originally designed for a target population, the poorest Americans.

01:07:10 It's now been dramatically expanded. And the irony of the expansion is that the poorest Americans

01:07:17 are now being robbed. Their services have dramatically. Decreased even though.

01:07:25 We've increased the price of Medicare by 60% over the last four years.

01:07:30 The target population is being robbed. Other options. Obviously you thought about that, and I

01:07:36 appreciate that. What reforms do you recommend? Again, that would improve. Services, I suppose, but

01:07:42 also make it more cost efficient.

01:07:46 President trump.

01:07:48 Has given me the charge.

01:07:51 Of improving quality of care and price of care for all Americans.

01:07:57 There are many things that we can do.

01:08:01 The ultimate outcome, I think, is to increase transparency. Increased accountability.

01:08:09 And to transition.

01:08:11 To. A value based system rather than a fee based system, so.

01:08:15 Medicaid in particular. Can you just kind of take those kind of general principles and apply it to

01:08:21 the Medicaid program.

01:08:24 Listen, I think that.

01:08:26 There are many options with telemedicine, with AI. Right now. And.

01:08:34 Including.

01:08:36 Direct primary care systems or seeing that move and grow across the country. There's one of the

01:08:43 largest.

01:08:45 So, going back to Medicaid, though, and speaking of these specific advances,

01:08:51 What reforms are you proposing?

01:08:54 With these ideas. Visa vis Medicaid. Well, I don't have.

01:08:59 A broad proposal for dismantling the program. Of course not saying that. I think what we need to do

01:09:06 is we need to experiment with pilot programs each state. We need to keep our eye.

01:09:12 On the ultimate goal, which is value based care, which is transparency. Accountability, access. And

01:09:18 one more thing, going back to Medicare, you mentioned you're an MA. You mentioned earlier the

01:09:22 Medicare fee for service. Do you have any kind of thoughts as to.

01:09:28 Whether or not patients on fee for service should move into MA or how should we handle that?

01:09:34 Whether.

01:09:36 Patients who are on Medicare fee for additional Medicare? Yes.

01:09:41 That is their choice right now.

01:09:45 I think 32 million Americans, or 30 million Americans on Medicare, on traditional Medicare and then

01:09:52 another 34 or.

01:09:56 34 on Medicare advantage, roughly half and a half.

01:10:02 And I think more people would rather be on Medicare advantage because.

01:10:07 It offers very good services.

01:10:10 But people can't afford it. It's much more expensive.

01:10:14 And answered your first question.

01:10:17 There are all kinds of exciting things that we can be doing, including cooperatives, which.

01:10:23 President Trump has supported, including health savings
accounts, which President Trump has
01:10:28 supported.
01:10:30 All of these things to make people more accountable for
their own health. And so we'd bring the
01:10:34 cooperatives and the health savings accounts into Medicare
and Medicaid. Exactly.
01:10:39 We try to increase.
01:10:43 Those. And to direct primary care.
01:10:48 To continue to transition. Into a value based program.
01:10:54 That is private American. Americans don't, by and large,
do not like the Affordable Care act. People
01:11:01 are on it. They don't like Medicaid, they like Medicare.
01:11:06 And they like private insurance.
01:11:09 We need to listen to what people they would prefer to be
on private insurance. Most Americans, if
01:11:14 they can afford to be will be on private insurance.
01:11:18 We need to figure out ways to improve care.
01:11:23 Particularly for elderly, for veterans, for the poor in
this country.
01:11:28 And Medicaid. The current model is not doing that. I would
ask any of the Democrats who were
01:11:33 chuckling just now.
01:11:35 Do you think all that money, the \$900 billion that we're
sending to Medicaid. Every year has made
01:11:41 Americans healthy. Do we think it's working for anybody?
01:11:45 Are the premiums low enough?
01:11:49 We do need to move on.
01:11:51 Senator Werner. Well, I got to tell you, for literally
hundreds of thousands of Virginians,
01:11:58 Medicaid is what prevents them from health crisis is on a
daily and weekly basis.
01:12:05 And some imaginary new plan.
01:12:09 And if there was a new plan.
01:12:11 That was to be the basis of what Trump was going to do
when repealing Obamacare. I would have
01:12:15 thought by now we'd have seen it. I got to tell you.
01:12:20 Mr. Kennedy, I got questions.
01:12:23 I appreciate our visit. I know.
01:12:25 You take your views seriously. And I don't reflexively
vote. I voted for four of President Trump's
01:12:31 nominees. Already got a lot of grief from folks on this
panel, but I got to tell you, I saw an email
01:12:38 that you put out Monday night or your campaigns. It.

01:12:42 's a fundraising email. Your presidential campaigns celebrated that. The freeze on all new
01:12:48 regulations, guidance and announcements is a way to protect unelected bureaucrats from further
01:12:54 undermining. Our health, freedom. Then you ask your donors to help pay for your campaign debt. Did
01:13:00 your campaign and you put out that I don't think my campaign exists anymore. Listen, I got to. Tell
01:13:06 you this. Somebody's out there soliciting money for it. Maybe you ought to. Find out who is. So the
01:13:12 fact that you celebrate this freeze, do you think that was a good idea to put all of this on hold
01:13:19 for 90 days. Funding and any kind of further work. NIH research.
01:13:25 As chairman grape pointed out,
01:13:29 I love Mike Cratebook. I'm asking you. You're up very important position. As he pointed out,
01:13:35 senator.
01:13:37 Were not closed as a result of the trumpet. Let me just tell you.
01:13:42 I'd like. I'd like you to explain to a domestic violence center in Richmond. It's saying because
01:13:47 this freeze, they may have to close down where those battered women to go or a rural nonprofit. I've
01:13:53 got in the shino value saying that freeze.
01:13:57 Is going to potentially shut down their ability to operate. So I guess if you deny or don't know
01:14:03 what your campaign is sending on. You don't know if you raised a lot of money Monday night. I'm
01:14:08 saying that the trumpet. You don't know if you raise a lot of money. The Trump administration has
01:14:13 made clear.
01:14:15 And it does not want to freeze benefits. Any American Medicaid or Medicare, and I do not want.
01:14:23 Medicaid. Beyond Medicare and Social Security.
01:14:28 I would hope you would have known that.
01:14:30 To be able to answer some of this. Now you've said publicly you want to immediately get rid of 600
01:14:36 NIH workers on job one on day one. When we had our meeting, you said you actually like to get rid of
01:14:44 2200 people from. Hhs.
01:14:48 Which offices are you going to start cutting and riffing these 2200 workers from?
01:14:54 There's 200 political appointees.

01:14:57 Or change during every administration. So if you got rid
of those 200 political appointees, you're,
01:15:00 not going to replace them with your political appointees.
01:15:04 President Biden this year.
01:15:06 Changed 3000 employees at hhs 3750.
01:15:12 What departments are you going to pick them from?
01:15:16 Well, the same as President Biden did when he changed 3000
out.
01:15:22 30. The chairman's been generous with colleagues on both
sides and may have to go a couple of
01:15:26 minutes over, but let me just say. So let's just answer.
01:15:31 I hope. Since you're asking to become the top.
01:15:35 Healthcare official in the United States in terms of HHS.
01:15:39 Huge ramifications. And part of this job is to be the
senior advisor to the president. On health
01:15:43 issues.
01:15:45 So when we're looking at this purge and we're looking at
laying off workers, when we're looking at
01:15:50 potentially the president's illegal offer to try to buy
out federal employees, which I would say
01:15:56 that any federal employees think twice.
01:15:59 Has this individual in his business world ever fulfilled
his contracts or obligations to any workers
01:16:05 in the past. But if you are in this position. Will you
pledge that you will not fire federal
01:16:12 employees who work on food safety? Work on trying to
preventing things like Salomano.
01:16:18 There's 91,000 employees. I take that as that's a simple
yes, and. I'm going to take that as a run.
01:16:27 Actually.
01:16:29 We talked about protecting Americans from cybercriminals.
Something we need to do a lot. More on.
01:16:34 Will you commit not to fire anyone?
01:16:38 In the health arena who currently works on protecting
Americans from cyber attacks in their
01:16:43 healthcare files.
01:16:46 I will commit not firing anybody who's doing their job.
01:16:50 Based on your opinion.
01:16:53 Based upon your opinion or your political agenda or Mr.
Trump's political agenda, based upon my
01:16:58 opinion.
01:17:00 I guess that means a lot of the folks who've had any type
of.
01:17:04 Views on vaccines will be out of work.

01:17:07 Will you freeze grant funding for community health centers?

01:17:12 Will you freeze federal funds for community health centers the way the current administration.

01:17:20 The White House has made clear.

01:17:23 And no funds are going to be denied to any American for benefits. Any program. You know what happens

01:17:28 at community health centers. Those are direct. Are you talking about the indian health centers. No,

01:17:32 I'm talking about community health centers across the country. I understand that.

01:17:37 You're going to excuse indian health, which is good, but others are not. They're going to get their

01:17:42 funds frozen. I strongly support community health centers, as does the president. So does that mean

01:17:47 you're not going to freeze the funding that is currently frozen?

01:17:52 None of that funding is supposed to be frozen. Sir. The direct payments are different than how the

01:17:58 government operates. We fund the federal government down to community health centers. As a former

01:18:04 governor, There's lots and lots of state programs that are related to health care that come from the

01:18:10 federal government. They come down to the state, then it goes to local programs, all of those. Don't

01:18:16 directly pay out a dollar at a time, but they come from federal funding.

01:18:22 Even though they keep changing the guidance on a minute by minute basis based upon 945 or 1030 or

01:18:29 1045. Whatever time it is today, those funds are still frozen. Sir. Honestly, I want to give you a

01:18:36 fair shot.

01:18:38 But I don't feel.

01:18:41 Like. You approach this job with the knowledge.

01:18:46 And candidly. Your willingness. Not. Willingness not to commit.

01:18:50 Trying to recommend to the president to make sure these funds are unfrozen and that people's lives

01:18:54 were at stake is a very disappointing answer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

01:18:59 Senator Langford, chairman. Thank you. Mr. Kennedy. Is good to see again. We had some great visits.

01:19:04 In my office. We've done some follow up calls to be able to go through you. And I have talked about

01:19:08 100 different issues and backgrounds and things you've
been able to address a lot of them today and
01:19:12 just different questions to be able to clear up social
media. Rumors and the things that are out
01:19:16 there on it. So I do appreciate that we've talked about
pharmacy. Benefit managers. We've talked
01:19:20 about the nursing home rule the Biden administration put
down. We talked about views on agriculture
01:19:24 and commercial and road crop agriculture. We've talked
about food issues. And you made it very, very
01:19:30 clear you're not going to tell Americans what to eat. But
you do want Americans to know what they're
01:19:34 eating, and I think that's a pretty fair perspective on
that. I do want to talk to you about some
01:19:39 areas that you and I have talked about as well, we have
some disagreements, you and I, on the issue
01:19:43 of life and when life begins, on that you've been very
outspoken on that, and we've had some good
01:19:48 opportunities to be able to talk about that. Title ten is
specifically in the HHS area.
01:19:54 This has been an area that has been interpreted for a long
time. And President Trump in the first
01:19:58 administration interpreted that rule to say that his
administration will prohibit the performance
01:20:03 referral for promotion. Of abortion as a part of the title
ten program. He made that very clear in
01:20:08 the first administration. Obviously, that's his decision
to make. Again on that, on how he wants to
01:20:13 handle that, and he's made. A lot of public statements on
that. The Biden administration not only
01:20:17 reversed that, not only rescinded that rule, but they went
one step the other direction in my state.
01:20:22 In Oklahoma, as you and I have talked about the Biden
administration cut off funding to the state of
01:20:28 Oklahoma. For aids testing, for breast cancer screening,
and for other areas of poverty. Health care
01:20:35 because my state didn't promote abortion. It wouldn't
provide if my state wouldn't promote abortion
01:20:42 in the states. We got cut off for federal funds for AIDS
testing. And for other things. My simple
01:20:49 question to you is, how are you going to handle title ten?
On that. I saw how President Biden
01:20:53 handled that in the punitive measure. Measures that came
on my state. For those that are in rural

01:20:57 healthcare, how are you going to handle time. I'm going to support President Trump's policies on

01:21:01 title ten. I agree. With President Trump that every abortion is a tragedy. I agree with them that we

01:21:09 cannot be a moral nation if we have 1.2 million. Abortions a year.

01:21:14 I agree with them that the states should control abortion.

01:21:19 On. President Trump has told me that.

01:21:22 He wants to. And late term abortions.

01:21:25 And he wants to protect conscientious exemptions and that he wants to end federal funding for abortions.

01:21:31 Here abroad. That's title ten.

01:21:35 I serve the pleasure of the president. I'm going to implement his policies. Thank you for that

01:21:39 President Biden, when he came in, immediately closed down the office of civil rights and conscience.

01:21:43 Protections within HHS. There's a statement that's come out recently that he's going to reopen that

01:21:49 office again to be able to protect the civil rights of Americans. One of the things that Javier

01:21:53 basera did immediately when. He came into HHS was conscience protections for medical professionals

01:21:59 that were being compelled against their conscience. To perform medical procedures that violated

01:22:04 their conscience. Javier Pusera stepped in immediately into HHS and withdrew that and said no. The

01:22:10 federal government will tell you what you believe about these issues. You don't have conscience

01:22:14 protections anymore. And refuse to protect those folks. Will you step in and say that healthcare

01:22:19 individuals have the right of conscience? Again, as the federal law allows. Yeah. I mean, the first

01:22:24 thing that occurs to me when you ask.

01:22:27 That question is, what patient?

01:22:30 Would want somebody doing a surgery on them that believes. That. Surgeries against their conscience,

01:22:36 being forced to perform that. I don't know anybody who would want to have a doctor performing a

01:22:42 surgery that the doctor.

01:22:44 Is morally opposed to.

01:22:48 Listen, I came from a family that was split on life and choice.

01:22:54 I have cousins today who believe that abortion at any stage is equivalent to homicide.

01:23:03 Now there are other people who believe the opposite. But
the good thing in my family that I really
01:23:10 loved is that we were able to have those conversations.
And respect each other, and I wish that we
01:23:16 could do that nationally.
01:23:20 And if forcing somebody.
01:23:24 To participate.
01:23:26 In a medical procedure. As a provider that they believe is
murder.
01:23:33 Does not make any sense to me. We need to welcome
diversity in this country. We need to respect
01:23:39 diversity.
01:23:41 And we need to respect each other when we have different
opinions. And. Not force our opinions on
01:23:47 other people. Yeah, thank you for that. The FDA, under the
Biden administration changed the rules
01:23:53 for the chemical abortion drug.
01:23:56 And said you no longer need to see a physician, so if you
have an epic pregnancy or all kinds of
01:24:00 don't even go anymore to see a physician. But they also
changed an area that. Has been something
01:24:05 that's been very particular. You've talked about a lot,
and that's transparency. They changed the
01:24:09 position and said, don't tell us if there's a side effect
on this drug unless she dies. But other
01:24:15 than that, don't tell us. Anymore, literally. Don't give
transparent information to the american
01:24:20 people or to the women who take this drug anymore. We
don't want that reported. My question. To you
01:24:26 is, will FDA move to be able to actually give transparency
to the american people and to say this
01:24:31 drug is no different than any other drug. I can protect it
just because it's political for some
01:24:35 folks. People should know side effects on this drug, and
there should be reporting.
01:24:41 It's against everything we believe in this country.
01:24:47 Patients or doctors should not be reporting adverse
events. We need to know what adverse events are.
01:24:55 We need to understand the safety of every drug.
01:24:59 And every other drug.
01:25:02 And President Trump.
01:25:05 Has made it clear to me that one of the things he is not
taking position yet. I'm never been at
01:25:10 Bristol a detailed position, but he's made it clear to me.
That he wants me to look at safety issues

01:25:18 and I'll ask NIH and FDA. To do that. Thank you, Senator Whitehouse.

01:25:24 Thank you, chairman. Mr. Kennedy.

01:25:28 I only have five minutes with you. And I've got. A lot of experience with cms. So you're just going

01:25:35 to have to listen. Two things. One. If you want to move.

01:25:43 From advocacy. To public responsibility. Americans are going to need to hear a clear.

01:25:52 And trustworthy.

01:25:55 Recantation of what?

01:25:57 You have said. On vaccinations, including a promise from you never to say vaccines aren't medically.

01:26:06 Safe.

01:26:08 When they, in fact, are.

01:26:11 And making indisputably clear that you support.

01:26:16 Mandatory vaccinations against diseases where that will keep people safe. You're in that hole pretty

01:26:25 deep.

01:26:26 We've just had a measles case in Rhode island, the first since 2013, and frankly.

01:26:34 You frighten people. Two. I want to air harms that Rhode island has experienced from a remorseless,

01:26:44 senseless.

01:26:46 Cms bureaucracy.

01:26:49 Cms has four years.

01:26:52 Maintained a reimbursement system.

01:26:55 That the bureaucracy could never explain, never justify.

01:27:00 That persistently pays Rhode island providers less.

01:27:05 Than neighboring Massachusetts and Connecticut providers. A differential of 23 and 26%.

01:27:14 In our regional healthcare market.

01:27:18 The pending ahead program can begin.

01:27:21 To remedy this, at least for value based care.

01:27:24 And it must.

01:27:26 There has to be payment parity in the region. Rhode Island's healthcare system is bleeding. Out.

01:27:33 Because we aren't paid.

01:27:36 What neighboring hospitals and doctors are paid. And the one act cms took on this.

01:27:43 Years ago was to make it worse.

01:27:47 The CMS bureaucracy has also attacked one of the best accountable care organizations in the country.

01:27:52 Rhode Island's Integra family doctors tried to throw them off the shared savings program because

01:27:59 they said.

01:28:02 Integra years ago briefly fell 137 patients short of the 5000 patients that acos need.

01:28:12 CMS wouldn't listen until a court.

01:28:16 Found that to be unjustified.

01:28:20 Likely illegal.

01:28:22 Irreparable. Harm to this high performing ACO and its patients, and contrary to the public interest

01:28:30 that must stop.

01:28:33 Last. CMS has refused to approve waivers granted elsewhere.

01:28:39 For Rhode island from rules that are stupid. For Medicare patients who are nearing the end of their

01:28:45 days.

01:28:46 Here's what families see. Granny is home dying. She needs to transfer to a nursing home.

01:28:55 And Medicare insists on putting her three days and two nights in a hospital. Expensive, frightening

01:29:02 to Granny in the family and stupid.

01:29:06 Granny's home dying and can't get palliative and curative care together.

01:29:11 Inhumane and stupid. Granny's home dying and can't get home care if she can still get out. Into the

01:29:19 yard or be driven to see the shore to see Narragansett beach, say one more time to recall childhood

01:29:26 memories before she dies. Inhumane and stupid.

01:29:32 Granny's home dying and the families exhausted and the respite care benefit.

01:29:38 Is not to send a nurse or a caregiver.

01:29:42 But to stuff granny in an ambulance. And hauler off to a hospital.

01:29:48 Some respite.

01:29:51 It's all expensive, frightening, inhumane and stupid. But the incenseate CMS bureaucracy takes a

01:30:01 court order.

01:30:03 To be awakened to the harm they cause.

01:30:08 I have had enough.

01:30:10 Cms should let rhode island try.

01:30:13 Humane end of life care through CMMI. Let's see if it works at a state I bet it will save money,

01:30:22 serve families better at a very, very delicate time, and perhaps even make a model for better health

01:30:29 care everywhere. I've said a lot. My time is out. You're welcome to respond in writing. I ask

01:30:35 unanimous consent that the order.

01:30:38 Declaring CMS's actions to constitute irreparable and illegal harm be put.

01:30:46 Into the record. Without objection. Let me just respond very briefly, Senator Whitehouse. I'm an

01:30:53 implacable enemy of tyrannical.

01:30:58 Incense.

01:31:00 A bureaucracies and stupid roles, and I will work with you. To make Sam as responsive to the needs

01:31:07 of Rhode island and to remedy those disparities. That you talk about. I am familiar with the Integra

01:31:14 health.

01:31:17 Plan.

01:31:19 And it is a template for what we ought to be doing. A value based plan, and I look forward to you to

01:31:26 making sure that.

01:31:28 We create pilot programs like this.

01:31:33 Around the country. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, one of the things I've learned in my tenure in the

01:31:37 Senate is that a nominee? Saying that they're willing to work with me amounts to exactly zero. We

01:31:43 need to get this fixed. Thank you.

01:31:46 Well, I guess at that point, then we will move on to Senator Dades. Mr. Chairman, thank you. Mr.

01:31:53 Kenny. I'm glad to see you here this morning.

01:31:57 I listened to your opening remarks and you mentioned that you want to make HHS the gold. Standard of

01:32:04 science. I have found my engagements with you both behind closed doors in my office as well as

01:32:10 listen. To you publicly to be very thoughtful. And science based. I applaud that. I thank you for

01:32:17 that. And I realize this will likely be a very partisan vote on this committee and on the Senate

01:32:22 floor. But let the record state there are three medical doctors on this side of the dais. I'm a

01:32:28 chemical engineer. We believe in science, and I'm thankful that you do, too. And you made that

01:32:33 comment in your opening remarks.

01:32:37 I want to talk about agriculture for a moment.

01:32:41 We talked about our common love for Montana. You've been to Montana? Many times. It's. A wonderful

01:32:45 state. A lot of folks have discovered it. They watch the show Yellowstone and people are coming and

01:32:49 moving into our state, but it's an amazing place.

01:32:53 But as you know, Agriculture is our top economic driver in Montana. We produce some of the highest

01:33:00 quality crops.

01:33:03 The best livestock in the country. In the world.

01:33:07 Our farmers and our ranchers are truly some of the most effective environmental stewards and

01:33:13 ensuring we have a safe food supply chain in the world. I share your view that protecting the

01:33:20 integrity and safety of our food supply is utmost importance.

01:33:26 I appreciate the research happening in places like Montana State University to help farmers produce

01:33:31 resilient healthy and safe crops, as well as their agricultural practices. You mentioned you were a

01:33:38 four age kid. Growing up. I think our four age kids and our FFA kids are some of the best. Kids in

01:33:43 America. My question for you, Mr. Kennedy, is if.

01:33:48 Confirmed. As I'm listening to my farmers and ranchers talk about the future. Will you commit to

01:33:54 working collaboratively with partners at USDA, at the relevant federal agencies as well as our

01:34:02 Montana farmers and ranchers before implementing any policy that might affect or impact food.

01:34:09 Supply.

01:34:12 Absolutely. My exact amendment.

01:34:14 I shared with you a personal commitment.

01:34:18 And a long career working with farmers. I want to make sure.

01:34:23 I understand. The very, very narrow margins, the slim margins.

01:34:28 At american farmers and ranchers aren't dealing with. And I don't want, under my watch as a single

01:34:35 farmer to have to leave as far for economic reasons or for regulatory or bureaucratic reasons. While

01:34:41 I serve, if I'm privileged to serve.

01:34:45 To be confirmed as HHS secretary. Even more important,

01:34:50 President Trump has a very, very strong commitment to farmers. President Trump.

01:34:57 Is probably historically in modern history. The best farm president in our history of armed income

01:35:07 spite for the first time in decades. Under his last administration.

01:35:13 He got solid support from farmers across the country, farm country, his Trump country. Armors across

01:35:19 the country supported him during this election.

01:35:23 He specifically instructed me.

01:35:26 And he wants farmers involved in every policy.

01:35:30 And that he wants me to work with Brooke Rollins at USDA, make sure that we preserve american
01:35:37 farmers that all of our policies support them. Kennedy thank you. And if confirmed, I look forward
01:35:42 to having you and Brooke Rollins out to Montana, spend some time with. My commitment to come there
01:35:48 anytime, particularly during ski season or on in season.
01:35:52 Deal.
01:35:55 Want to shift gears for a moment as we discussed in the meeting we had in my office. Mephapristone
01:36:03 was approved in 2000. The FDA has been their scrutiny and brought to court for failure to properly
01:36:09 assess this drug. As well as subsequent deregulations Senator Langford described that occurred over
01:36:16 the past 25 years. Some of these deregulations included ending the requirement that these drugs be
01:36:22 prescribed by a doctor. Ending reporting requirements for adverse events and allowing these pills to
01:36:30 be obtained through the mail. In fact, the FDA's own prescribing label mentioned that three to 5% of
01:36:40 women taking this drug end up in the emergency room?
01:36:45 My question is, if confirmed, as secretary of HHS, will you commit to working with the FDA?
01:36:51 Commission review. Reviews that are threatening the safety of women.
01:37:01 Sorry, senator.
01:37:04 As I said.
01:37:06 To Senator Langford.
01:37:09 I think it's immoral to have a policy where patients are not allowed to report. Adverse events and
01:37:15 where doctors are discouraged from doing that.
01:37:19 President Trump has asked me to study the safety of mifipry stone.
01:37:24 He has not yet taken.
01:37:27 A stand on how to regulate it. Whatever he does, I will implement those policies, and I will. Work
01:37:33 with this committee, make those policies make sense. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. Senator HaSsan thank
01:37:41 you, Mr. Chair and ranking member Wyden. And welcome, Mr. Kennedy. And to your family as well. I
01:37:46 want to start with a couple of concerns I have, and just briefly. On Medicaid. States share in the
01:37:53 funding of Medicaid.
01:37:56 Millions of disabled children in this country are alive because of Medicaid. Millions of people with

01:38:01 addiction in this country are in recovery because of the services provided to them by Medicaid. And

01:38:07 millions of chronically ill people who, until Medicaid expansion was enacted, who couldn't. Get

01:38:13 health care and therefore couldn't work because they were too sick. Got health care through Medicaid

01:38:18 expansion, then went back to work, and now they're on private insurance. So those are some facts

01:38:22 about Medicaid that you might want to brush. Up on now. I am also extremely concerned about your

01:38:29 endorsement of radical fringe conspiracies that, if implemented, at HSS, HHS would put american

01:38:36 families lives at risks. Vaccines are one of our greatest public health triumphs and. I'm not

01:38:44 talking about abstract medical science. One of the people who helped raise me was my grandfather who

01:38:48 was a pediatrician. He practiced medicine in this country from 1921 until the mid 1980s, and I heard

01:38:55 details about the difference those vaccines made in saving lives in the children who were under his

01:39:01 care. Vaccination has helped. To eradicate many deadly diseases in the United States, including

01:39:07 polio and smallpox, something we should be proud of as Americans. I am extremely concerned that as

01:39:14 secretary, you would be able to halt critical vaccine research and to exploit parents natural

01:39:20 worries by advising them not to vaccinate their children. This. Will lead to more children getting

01:39:25 sick, and some will even die before the measles vaccine. About 500 american children died a year

01:39:33 from measles. This is too much of a risk. For our country. And there is no reason that any of us

01:39:39 should believe that you have reversed. The antivaccine views that you have promoted. For 25 years.

01:39:46 For example, you have previously falsely suggested that the polio vaccine killed many, many more

01:39:54 people than polio ever did by causing fatal cancers. While rigorous safety studies show that to be

01:40:01 completely false now. Let's go to something we agree upon.

01:40:07 I am really heartened to see that one area where we agree on is on women's. Reproductive freedom. In

01:40:13 your own words, it's not the government's place to tell. People what to do with their bodies. You

01:40:19 said that, correct? Yeah. Mr. Kennedy, in 2023, you came to New Hampshire and said, quote, I'm pro.

01:40:28 Choice. I don't think the government has any business
telling people what they can or cannot. Do
01:40:33 with their body. So you said that, right? Yes. But you
also said we need to trust. The women to make
01:40:40 that choice because. I don't trust government to make any
choices. You said that too, right? Yes, it
01:40:46 is. Remarkable that you have such a long record of
fighting for women's reproductive freedom. And
01:40:51 really great that my republican colleagues are so open to
voting for approach HHS secretary. So, Mr.
01:40:58 Kennedy I'm confused. You have clearly. Stated in the past
that bodily autonomy is one of your core
01:41:04 values. The question is, do you stand for that value or
not? When was it that you decided to sell
01:41:11 out the values you've had your whole life in order to be
given power by. President Trump.
01:41:18 Senator, I agree with President Trump that every abortion
is a tragedy that we can't be a moral
01:41:23 authority in this country. Right, but that isn't what you
said back in New Hampshire in 2023. My
01:41:28 question is. Exactly when did you decide to sell out your
life's work and values to get this?
01:41:34 Position.
01:41:35 Senator. I agree with President Trump. Every abortion is a
tragedy. So what you're telling us just
01:41:41 to be clear, because my time is limited.
01:41:44 Is that regardless of what you believe, regardless of what
values you have, if President Trump tells
01:41:49 you to do something.
01:41:52 You're going to do it. You've said just now the discussion
about mythic prieststone. Oh, he's asked
01:41:56 me to study the safety of it.
01:41:59 Here are the safety studies that tell us mifipry stone is
safe and effective and I asked Mr. Chair
01:42:05 that. About 40 studies be admitted to the record by
unanimous consent without objection. So the
01:42:13 studies are there. The safety is proved, the science is
there. But what you're telling us is if
01:42:18 president Trump orders you to take action to make it
harder for women to get direly needed health.
01:42:25 Care, you'll follow. His order. If Mr. Trump, as he did
yesterday, orders a halt on Medicaid
01:42:33 payments, that are essential for taking care of people
with disabilities all around this country.

01:42:39 You're going to follow that order because you are willing to sacrifice your values, your knowledge.

01:42:46 If President Trump tell. Tells you to do that. That, to me, is unacceptable in a secretary of health

01:42:50 and human services.

01:42:53 As I explained before, the White House.

01:42:57 Has issued.

01:42:59 A statement saying that. That policy will not deprive any American. The problem is the White House

01:43:08 issued that statement only after we pointed out the damage it would do, and it became politically

01:43:13 uncomfortable for them. You know what else?

01:43:17 That freeze on federal funding did. It halted funds for critical research that could cure pediatric

01:43:25 cancer.

01:43:26 So if the president tells you to do that, you're going to stop that, too. That's enough.

01:43:32 Thank you, Senator Cortez. Masto is next.

01:43:37 Thank you.

01:43:39 Mr. Kennedy, thank you for coming into my office and having the conversation that we did.

01:43:44 I appreciate your passion and your belief, and you've spent years.

01:43:50 Really talking about the issues that matter to you, and I appreciate that. Let me ask you a couple

01:43:55 of questions, though. I just need some clarification. Right now. There's a 40. Year old law that

01:44:02 requires hospital ers.

01:44:05 Accepting payment from Medicare. To actually provide emergency care to patients. So let's say a

01:44:11 woman experiencing a life threatening condition, like a heart attack goes to the ER. As a lawyer,

01:44:17 you would agree that that federal law protects her right to emergency care, correct?

01:44:23 Yes. So now a pregnant woman with life threatening bleeding from an incomplete miscarriage goes to

01:44:30 the er.

01:44:33 Let me rephrase that. So you can hear a pregnant woman with a life threatening.

01:44:40 Bleeding from an incomplete miscarriage goes to the ER, and her doctor also determines that she

01:44:46 needs an emergency abortion, but she's in a state where abortion is banned. You would agree also as

01:44:54 an attorney, that federal law protects her right to that emergency care, correct?

01:45:02 I don't know.

01:45:04 The answer to that is, I don't know if this. Well, let me ask you this. As an attorney, doesn't

01:45:08 federal law preempt state law?

01:45:12 The federal constitution does.

01:45:14 Sometimes not every federal law preempts state laws.

01:45:19 It could be unconstitutional.

01:45:22 I'm just telling you. I appreciate that. But what authority do you have over this? As the director

01:45:29 of HHS, what authority do I. Have. Yeah, to enforce the law.

01:45:35 In what regards?

01:45:38 To make sure that a hospital that receives.

01:45:42 Payment from Medicare is ensuring that they are providing the necessary emergency care to patients

01:45:48 when they present. It's actually the Impala law. So what authority as hHS director do you have? With

01:45:55 respect to. My understanding is that I have budgetary power and that it's pretty much limited to

01:46:01 that if you tell me I have another authority, I don't even think that. Well, let me tell you. We

01:46:07 have a law enforcement branch at H. Actually, you do, and that's. CMS. CMS actually investigates

01:46:13 complaints of Entala violations. As well as the health and human services inspector general, who, by

01:46:20 the way, was just recently fired. By Donald Trump, so you will be enforcing him to Allah laws. And

01:46:27 it's important that you understand their impact. And don't play politics with the patient.

01:46:32 Presenting at the ER based on a position that. This administration has taken. Let me ask you another

01:46:39 question. When we met in my office,

01:46:43 You said about lowering drug prices, that when big pharma price gouges the american people suffer. I

01:46:49 think we both agree on that. And I think you're insincere in your belief that you want to reduce

01:46:55 prices for Americans, correct? Yes.

01:46:59 The Inflation Reduction act empowered Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices.

01:47:05 It penalizes drug companies for price hikes above inflation, and it caps seniors out of pocket. Drug

01:47:12 costs, along with reducing insulin prices to \$35 per month. But. Your future boss, Donald Trump, on

01:47:21 his first day in office. Revoked President Biden's executive order. That actually directed the

01:47:27 health secretary to examine ways to reduce drug prices and improve access to innovative therapies

01:47:35 for the american people. And unfortunately, Republicans in Congress want to repeal the Inflation

01:47:42 Reduction act, which means reversing all of those things that we worked on. To lower prices for

01:47:48 Americans. So my question to you is.

01:47:52 What do you do?

01:47:54 Why are you there? Are you there to be a rubber stamp?

01:47:59 To this administration and cave into all of.

01:48:02 These positions that they're taking, even though you.

01:48:06 Know they're in disagreement with your positions on lowering drug prices and that they could harm

01:48:10 american. Americans. How do you handle that as hhs direct?

01:48:15 My understanding. Is that the White House issued an executive order, I believe, today.

01:48:22 Supporting the drug negotiations under the IRA.

01:48:26 President Trump was very aggressive during his first term about negotiating drug prices.

01:48:33 He has instructed me, and I've met with him repeatedly. As though we need lower prices as seniors in

01:48:39 this country.

01:48:43 Let me ask you this because I only have so much time.

01:48:47 So we've already negotiated lowering prices for ten drugs with big pharma and big pharma, by the

01:48:52 way, opposes this.

01:48:54 They are asking for a pause. They have filed lawsuits, but we've already negotiated the first. Ten

01:48:59 drugs. And we want to expand it to the next ten to 15 that the Biden administration has put forward,

01:49:05 would you agree and continue that path? Of really mandating that big pharma come to the table and

01:49:12 negotiate drug prices for Medicare so we can lower those prices for Americans. My understanding is

01:49:17 that the executive order that was issued today, which I haven't seen, but I've read a summary. Well,

01:49:22 let me ask you this, then, because you keep citing the Trump administration and you're just going to

01:49:26 follow what they say. Is that what you're doing? You're just a rubber? Stamp in this position.

01:49:32 It doesn't matter. That year before, it could be anybody coming before us. As long as they're a

01:49:36 rubber stamp for this administration. And disregarding your beliefs and what you think. I guess my

01:49:41 question to you is, if it really is fundamental to what you believe, how do you live with that?

01:49:47 How do you address those issues as you're moving forward?

01:49:52 You want me to answer the question? No, I'm asking you.

01:49:57 Okay. President Trump has asked me and the chronic disease epidemic and make America healthy again.

01:50:05 And I am. The only reason why you're at HHS. Is that the only reason? Why, then you're at the HHS to

01:50:10 address that one issue. President Trump is as may because I'm in a unique position to end that.

01:50:17 And that is what I'm doing.

01:50:21 And if we don't solve that problem, senator, all of the other disputes we have about who's paying?

01:50:28 And whether it's insurance companies, whether.

01:50:31 It's providers, whether it's hmos, whether it's patients or families, all of those are moving deck

01:50:37 chairs around in the Titanic. Our ship is sinking.

01:50:42 Our 60% increase in Medicaid over the past four years.

01:50:47 Is the biggest budget.

01:50:50 Line now, and it's growing faster than any other and no other nation in the world. Has what we have

01:50:55 here. No other nation has a chronic disease. We have the highest chronic disease. Burden of any

01:51:01 country in the world.

01:51:03 During Covid, we had 16% of the Covid deaths in a country we only have 4.2% of the world's

01:51:09 population, we had a higher discount than any country. In the world. And when CDC was as.

01:51:16 Why? Ace said it's because Americans are the sickest people on earth. The average person who died

01:51:21 from Covid.

01:51:24 American had 3.8 chronic diseases.

01:51:27 This is an existential threat, economically, to our military or health, to our sense of well being.

01:51:33 And it is a priority for President Trump. And that's why he asked me around the agency. And if I'm

01:51:39 privileged to be confirmed, that's exactly what I'll. Do.

01:51:47 Senator Barrasso. Thanks so much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kennedy, thank you for taking time to visit.

01:51:51 With me in my office prior to today's hearing to talk about a lot of the important issues affecting

01:51:56 healthcare in my home state of Wyoming as well as the nation. I appreciate your willingness to serve

01:52:01 our country. During our meeting, we discuss. The challenges that healthcare providers and patients

01:52:06 are facing in rural America. Financial obstacles facing rural hospitals workforce shortages. Issues

01:52:13 of OBGYN and then new regulations that are painful that have come out of the Biden administration,

01:52:18 hurting our ability to provide nursing home staffing. So let me start. If I could with rural

01:52:23 hospitals and the closures of hospitals like that.

01:52:28 There are a lot of challenges facing hospitals in rural communities. In frontier areas, we have 33

01:52:33 hospitals. In Wyoming, 26 are really located in areas, locations often hard to get to. Weather

01:52:40 impacts them. Six of the hospitals are at risk of closing. Two are an immediate risk of

01:52:46 closing. In the next two years, ten have had to cut available services, and this is a concern of

01:52:53 rural hospitals, both Republican and Democrat states. Either way, bipartisan, critical that the

01:52:58 workforce challenges financial challenges that we're facing are addressed. Can you commit to working

01:53:04 with us on a plan to address the critical. Nationwide issue of rural health care.

01:53:12 And I would say that during my visit I visited almost 60 senators of our and the most common.

01:53:21 Unifying, I would say, issue among both Democrats and Republicans. There were two. One was BBM

01:53:26 reform. And the others were all hospitals.

01:53:31 And our nation made a commitment over 100 years ago.

01:53:36 At a hospital within 30 miles of every American.

01:53:39 We generally succeeded in doing that.

01:53:43 It's absolutely critical. It's life saving. And rural hospitals.

01:53:48 Are closing at an extraordinary rate right now.

01:53:52 Not only provide.

01:53:55 Important health care for the localities, but also they're economic drivers for localities all over

01:53:59 this country.

01:54:03 President Trump is determined to end the hemorrhage of rural hospitals, and he's asked me to do

01:54:09 that.

01:54:11 Through. Use of AI through telemedicine, which these are innovations that I saw the other day. A

01:54:20 Cleveland clinic.

01:54:22 Has developed an AI nurse.

01:54:26 That. You cannot distinguish from a human being that has diagnostics as good as any doctor.

01:54:32 And. We can provide.

01:54:36 Concierge care to every American in this country, even those. Parts of Wyoming, Montana, Alaska, et

01:54:42 cetera.

01:54:45 We also have opportunities at hrsa and at the gme.

01:54:51 Finally live up to GMA's mesh and.

01:54:56 Of providing personnel to rural hospitals. And I intend to use all of my power because I've seen.

01:55:04 The priority that it's given by both Democrats and Republicans on this committee.

01:55:10 I intend to make that a priority of my admin if I'm privileged to be confirmed. I appreciate it

01:55:15 because often with financial strains on a local hospital, one of the common services to be cut in

01:55:21 rural hospitals and maternity services. And now we have women in Wyoming having to drive over 100

01:55:26 miles to access care.

01:55:29 13 counties in Wyoming don't have access to Ob, and we're talking county's. Larger than the states

01:55:33 of Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware counties larger than

01:55:38 those whole states. So will you commit to working with my office to find solutions to help address

01:55:43 these specific maternal health challenges in rural America. Yes, I look forward to it. Another issue

01:55:49 we specifically spoke about. With this harmful Biden administration rule that have really been bad

01:55:55 for our rural nursing homes and it's a rule that would triple the registered nurse requirements in

01:56:01 nursing homes. This is going to lead. There just aren't enough registered nurses in our state to be

01:56:06 able to comply. With this. This would lead to nursing home closures across our state. Will you

01:56:10 commit to working? With me. To fix. This serious problem that it was a result of a rule that came

01:56:15 out by the Biden administration who clearly doesn't understand rural America.

01:56:20 Yes, Senator, I think the rule was well intentioned, but as you've said, and I've heard from many

01:56:26 role senators. It will be a disaster for their estate. Some of the nurse these are staffing rules

01:56:33 that require 24 hours staffing by medical professionals. Some of the nursing homes in rural areas

01:56:40 simply. Do not have the available personnel or the economics be able to do that.

01:56:46 It will mean the closure of nursing homes in rural areas across our country, which means the parents

01:56:52 the elderly parent will be moved. A great distance from the local community and their family. And we

01:56:59 know that a single greatest driver of high quality nursing home care.

01:57:07 Is involvement, the proximity of family members when you move.

01:57:12 That nursing facility.

01:57:14 Away from the community where the kids live. You're going to get much worse care, so. The intention,

01:57:20 although it was noble, was in reality for rural areas at least, it is going to be a disaster. Thank

01:57:28 you, Mr. Chairman.

01:57:30 Thank you, Senator Johnson.

01:57:34 Mr. Kendy, welcome.

01:57:36 Thank you for being here.

01:57:39 Thank you for your decades long advocacy for a clean environment.

01:57:45 For children's health. I can't say as I'm surprised by the hostility on the other side.

01:57:53 I'm highly disappointed in it.

01:57:56 I don't know if you remember when you called me up and you were contemplating setting your political

01:58:02 differences aside.

01:58:04 Joying forces with President Trump on an area of agreement.

01:58:08 Addressing chronic illness, trying to find the root cause of.

01:58:13 All these problems facing this nation.

01:58:16 My first response was, Bobby, this is an answer to my prayers.

01:58:21 We need to get to the answers of this. But even more.

01:58:25 We need to heal and unify this divided nation.

01:58:29 I'm not necessarily the most optimistic guy because we've got enormous challenges facing this.

01:58:33 Nation, but I thought, wow.

01:58:36 Here's somebody from the left. Somebody I don't agree with on many issues politically. Coming

01:58:42 together with President Trump.

01:58:46 And focusing on an area of agreement, something that the american people. Desperately want.

01:58:55 Finding out the answers. What has caused autism?

01:58:59 What is causing chronic illness.

01:59:02 Ms kenny.

01:59:05 I think I've come to know what's in your heart.

01:59:08 I think I know the personal and political price you've paid for this decision.

01:59:14 I want to say publicly. I thank you for that. I truly appreciate what you're doing. Here.

01:59:24 Can't we come together as a nation?

01:59:29 And do this.

01:59:32 Can we do? Aren't you getting tired of this? I'm getting tired of this. So again, Mr. Kennedy.

01:59:41 I need to enter in the record.

01:59:44 These are just eleven letters of support signed by 63,000 people, thousands of doctors.

01:59:52 From the American Associate or Association, American Physicians and Surgeons Independent medical

01:59:56 Alliance, the North Carolina physicians and freedom group governor Jeff Landry from Louisiana. These

02:00:02 are Americans nonpartisan.

02:00:06 A lot of these people. I have note because I've advocated with you a lot of them are democrats. They

02:00:12 put their political differences aside. So, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to enter. This in the record

02:00:16 without objection. I also do want to, Ms. Kendy, as long as I have you here?

02:00:22 I've written over.

02:00:25 70 oversight letters to the federal health agencies under the Biden administration. I've virtually

02:00:28 gotten squat out of them. Okay, what I get is.

02:00:34 We get, for example,

02:00:37 50 pages of Anthony Fauci's emails.

02:00:41 Redacted.

02:00:44 By the way. The latest one was 17 pages. Instead of issuing a health alert on the myocardial

02:00:50 myocarditis they knew was impacting young men.

02:00:55 Early in 2021 instead of issuing an alert on the health alert network.

02:01:01 They developed 17 pages of talking points.

02:01:08 This was given to the public under a for request. They had to go to court. They've got a new way of

02:01:12 redacting. They don't black things out, they just. Give you white pages so you don't even know what

02:01:16 they have redacted.

02:01:19 So again, I've issued a subpoena now to cover the information I've requested 70 oversight letters.

02:01:25 My question to you is.

02:01:28 As secretary hhs, will you?

02:01:32 Honor these requests from Congress. And will you make HHS transparent?

02:01:38 Yeah. My approach. Hhs as I said before, senator.

02:01:43 Is radical transparency. Democrats and Republicans ought to be able to come in.

02:01:48 And get information that was generated at taxpayer expense that is owned by the american taxpayer.

02:01:54 They shouldn't get redacted documents. Public health agencies should be transparent.

02:01:59 And if we want Americans to restore trust in the public health agencies, we need transparency.

02:02:10 I want to say something about what you first said. When I launched my campaign. It was about.

02:02:16 Uniting American Democrats and Republicans.

02:02:20 There's no issue that she united. Health epidemic. There's no such thing as republican children or

02:02:27 democratic children. These are our.

02:02:30 Kids. 66% of them are damaged. I know what a healthy kid looks like because I had so many of them in

02:02:37 my family.

02:02:39 I didn't owe anybody with a food allergy growing up. Peanut allergy.

02:02:44 Why do five of my kids have allergies? Why are we seeing these explosions and diabetes? Rheumatoid

02:02:49 arthritis, neurological diseases, depression.

02:02:55 All these things that are related to toxic in the environment, why can't we just agree? With each

02:02:59 other.

02:03:02 To put differences about so many issues, intractable issues aside,

02:03:08 We're going to end this. I don't think anybody. Is going to be able to do this like I have.

02:03:15 Because of my peculiar experience.

02:03:18 Because I've litigated against these agencies. When you litigate against them, you get a PhD in

02:03:23 corporate capture and how to unravel it.

02:03:26 I've written six books about these agencies. I know a lot about them, and I know how to fix it, and

02:03:32 there's.

02:03:34 Nobody who will fix it the way that I do because I'm not scared of vested. Interest. I don't care.

02:03:41 I'm not here because I want a position or a job. I have a very good life and a happy family.

02:03:47 This is something I don't need. I want to do this because we're going. To fix it. And the other

02:03:51 thing is, we are attracting now.

02:03:55 A caliber of people to hhs.

02:03:58 Like never before in history. And there are entrepreneurs.

02:04:02 They're disruptors. They're innovators of immense talents that are walking away. Many of them from

02:04:06 growing concerns. They're not coming.

02:04:10 There or position. They're coming there because they want to save our country and they're from

02:04:14 across the political spectrum.

02:04:17 And all these Democrats are opposed to me for partisan issues. They used to be my friends agreed.

02:04:22 With me on all the environmental issues that I've been working on for my whole career.

02:04:28 Out there against me, because anything that President Trump does, any decision he makes, has.

02:04:35 To. Be lampooned, derided, discredited, marginalized, vilify. We need to move. On Senator Warren.

02:04:45 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, Mr. Kennedy, I want to start with something that I think you and I

02:04:49 agree on, and that is that big pharma has too much power. In Washington. You've said that. President

02:04:57 Trump asks you to, quote, clean up corruption and conflict.

02:05:03 Sounds great. You've said that you will, quote, slam shut the revolving door between government

02:05:09 agencies. And the companies they regulate. That also sounds great. So here's an easy question.

02:05:17 Will you commit that when you leave this job you will not accept compensation from a drug company? A

02:05:21 medical device company.

02:05:24 A hospital system or a health insurer for at least four years, including as a lobbyist or a board

02:05:30 member.

02:05:31 Can you just repeat the last part of the question?

02:05:35 You're not going to take money from drug companies in any way, shape or form.

02:05:39 Yes.

02:05:41 I'm happy to commit to that. That's what I figured. I said it's. An easy question to start with.

02:05:48 And I think you're right on this. I don't think any of them want to give me money, by the way.

02:05:54 Let's keep going. You're right, because. To say yes, because every American has the right to know

02:06:00 that every decision you make as our number one health officer is to help them and not to make money

02:06:08 for yourself in the future. So I want to talk more about
money. I'm looking at your paperwork right
02:06:14 now. In the past two years, you've raked in two and a half
million dollars from a law firm called
02:06:20 Wizner bomb. You go online, you do commercials to
encourage people to sign. Up with Wisnerbaum to
02:06:28 join lawsuits against vaccine makers and for everyone who
signs up. You personally get paid. And if
02:06:35 they win their case, you get 10% of what they win. So if
you bring in somebody who gets \$10 million,
02:06:44 you walk away with a million dollars. Now, you just said
that you want the american people to know
02:06:50 you can't be bought. Your decisions won't depend on how
much money you could. Make in the future.
02:06:55 You won't go to work for a drug company after you leave.
Hhs. But you and I both know there's
02:07:01 another way to make money. So. Mr. Kennedy, will you also
agree that you won't take any compensation
02:07:09 from any lawsuits against drug companies.
02:07:14 While you are secretary and for four years afterwards.
02:07:19 Well, I'll certainly commit.
02:07:22 To that while I'm secretary, but I do want to clarify
something because you're making me sound like
02:07:27 a shell.
02:07:30 I put together that case.
02:07:34 I did the science day presentation of the judge on that
case to get it into court. Mr. Albertier Mr.
02:07:40 Kenny, it's just a really simple question.
02:07:43 You've taken in two and a half million dollars. I want to
know if you will. Commit right now that
02:07:48 not only will you not go to work for drug companies, you
won't. Go to work suing the drug companies
02:07:54 and taking your rake out of that while you're a secretary.
And for four years after. I'll commence
02:08:01 it and not take any fees from drug companies. Well, I'm
secretary.
02:08:06 I'm asking about fees from suing drug companies. Will you
agree not to do that?
02:08:14 You're asking me to not sue drug companies? No, and I'm
not going to. Agree. As much as you want.
02:08:21 I am not going to agree to not sue companies or anybody.
So let's do a quick count here.
02:08:28 Of how as secretary of HHS, if you get confirmed.
02:08:33 You can influence every one of those lawsuits. Well, let
me start the list. You could publish your

02:08:39 antivaccine conspiracies, but this time on us. Government
letterhead. Something a jury. Might be
02:08:45 impressed by. You could appoint.
02:08:49 Panel who share your antivax views and let them do your
dirty work. You could tell the CDC vaccine
02:08:56 panel to remove a particular vaccine from the vaccine
schedule. You could remove vaccines from
02:09:02 special compensation programs, which would open up
manufacturers to mass torts. You could. Make more
02:09:09 injuries eligible for compensation even if there is no
causal evidence you could change vaccine
02:09:15 court processes to make it easier to bring junk lawsuits.
You could turn over FDA data to your
02:09:21 friends. At the law firm and they could use it however it
benefited them. You could change vaccine
02:09:26 labeling. You could change vaccine. Information rules.
02:09:31 You could change which claims are compensated in the
vaccine injury compensation program. There's a
02:09:38 lot of ways that you can influence those future lawsuits
and pending lawsuits while you are
02:09:44 secretary of HHS, and I'm asking you to commit right now
that you will not take.
02:09:52 A financial state.
02:09:54 In every one of those lawsuits so that what you do as
secretary will also benefit you financially.
02:09:59 Down the line. I'll comply with all the ethical guidance.
That's not the question. You and I. You
02:10:06 have said. You're asking me, senator. You're asking me not
to sue vaccine.
02:10:17 Look, no one should be fooled here.
02:10:21 Of HHS, Robert Kennedy will have the power to undercut
vaccines and vaccine manufacturing across our
02:10:29 country. And for all of his talk about follow the science
and his promise that he won't. Interfere
02:10:36 with those of us who want to vaccinate his kids. The
bottom line. Is the same. Kennedy can kill off
02:10:43 access to vaccines and make millions of dollars while he
does. It. Kids might die, but Robert
02:10:50 Kennedy can keep cashing in.
02:10:54 Senator, I support vaccines.
02:10:57 I support the childhood schedule.
02:11:00 I will do that. The only thing I want is good science, and
that's it. How? About didn't say you
02:11:06 won't make money off what you do as secretary of HHS.
Before we go to Senator Tillis, I think it

02:11:14 would be important for me to make it very clear that Mr. Kennedy has gone through the same office of
02:11:19 government ethics process. As every single other nominee in the finance committee this year and in
02:11:26 previous administrations. In addition to listing his assets, including items that you've identified.
02:11:32 He has signed an ethics letter that has been reviewed by the office of Government Ethics concerning
02:11:38 any possible conflict in light of. Its functions and the nominees proposed duties. And we have a
02:11:44 letter from the office of government ethics. That he hasn't complied completely with all applicable
02:11:51 laws and regulations governing conflicts of interest. Mr. Chairman, point of information here. Have
02:11:59 we had a single nominee come through who's made two and a half million dollars off suing one of the
02:12:07 entities that it would be regulating. And plans to keep getting a take of every lawsuit in the
02:12:14 future. Have we had that before? I haven't reviewed the past documentation of every other nominees
02:12:20 financial interests and so no, but. I know that every single time we get a nominee, their financial
02:12:25 interests are attacked. That's why we have the office of Government Ethics. That's why they've
02:12:30 reviewed everything that's in his record, and that's why he. Has even. I think, and I don't know
02:12:37 that I want to ask him to get into it. But he has listed his assets and. Has gone through a
02:12:43 discussion of the responsibilities under our ethics laws and is complied with all of those
02:12:50 requirements.
02:12:52 Senator tillis.
02:12:54 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kennedy, how's your morning going?
02:12:58 So far, so good.
02:13:01 You came prepared. I'm glad that you did.
02:13:06 You, I believe, addressed my satisfaction and question about title ten and the president's priority
02:13:12 with respect to planned parenthood, can you just affirm that you are 100% behind the president's?
02:13:18 Policy on title ten and the I'm 100% behind it, thank you.
02:13:26 It's amazing to me that people. Well, first off, you need to understand. I was in a judiciary
02:13:32 hearing this morning. It's very clear to me that some of these nominations are going to be shirts

02:13:36 and skins. So no matter what, you answer under the affirmative. They're going to ask you one more
02:13:41 question so that you won't be able to answer in the affirmative. That's just the way the game that's
02:13:45 played when we have.
02:13:48 Nominees like yourself. So I think you're handling yourself well. I got a real quick question. For
02:13:53 you. Are you a conspiracy theorist?
02:13:57 That is a pejorative, senator. That's applied to me.
02:14:02 Mainly to keep me from asking difficult questions of powerful interest.
02:14:08 I was told.
02:14:10 That I was a conspiracy theorist.
02:14:13 And label was applied to me because I said that the vaccines, the Covid vaccine. Didn't prevent
02:14:19 transmission and it wouldn't prevent infection. When the government was telling people Americans
02:14:25 that it would. I was saying that because I was looking at the monkey studies in may. Of 2020. I was
02:14:31 called to conspiracy, and now everybody admits it. I was called a conspiracy theorist because I said
02:14:36 red dye cause cancer. And now FDA has acknowledged that and banned it. I was called a conspiracy
02:14:44 theorist? Because I said.
02:14:47 Fluoride lowered IQ. Last week, Jama published a matter of view of 87 studies saying that there's a
02:14:53 direct inverse correlation between IQ laws. All right, so I'm going to assume.
02:14:59 For about a week. Is there any one of them that you can say, you got me that? Really was a
02:15:03 conspiracy theory.
02:15:05 Are you in a possession to submit? For the record, I think it'd just be helpful. For every one of
02:15:09 these narratives for you to submit that maybe for the record.
02:15:14 You said something about snap lunch. I was in the state house in North Carolina before I came. Here.
02:15:18 And anytime I'd go visit an elementary school, the first thing I would do is. Go to the trash cans
02:15:24 in the cafeteria.
02:15:26 And what we have now are kids that are not eating the food because the dictates. Of the federal
02:15:32 government have made it something that they don't want, but they say, well, it's a healthy

02:15:36 alternative. It has processed materials in it and it's not particularly attractive to them, so they

02:15:42 throw it away. Trash cans full of food that these kids didn't. Eat. So then what do they do? They go

02:15:47 eat snacks, or they go eat a shirt or they drink a sugar drink.

02:15:51 The Snap program. Everything you've said about the Snap program, I agree with. I think that we

02:15:55 should be very, very strict about that, and it's going to make some people uncomfortable. In the

02:16:00 food manufacturing segment produce healthy foods that we can put in the SNAP program that's. The way

02:16:04 to address it. But we also need to look at the school health program. I was PTA president 21, 22

02:16:12 years ago at my daughter's high school.

02:16:16 And I feel like.

02:16:19 We've got these kids that need help. We've got to guide them through a process. Many of them are

02:16:24 probably on Medicaid, and Medicaid is felon them. Everybody here says Medicaid is sacrosync.

02:16:29 Nobody's admitted that Medicaid is not producing positive health outcomes. Is that your problem,

02:16:35 Medicaid right now? The program or the outcomes is the outcomes. We're spending \$900 billion. People

02:16:42 are getting sicker every single year. Yeah. So anyway, President Trump wants people to have

02:16:47 Americans have high quality insurance. Anybody who's building a case for the status quo of Medicaid.

02:16:52 Is by extension saying that they're happy with the outcomes. I think it's unacceptable. I do have a

02:16:58 question for you. On Project Warp speed, we support at the CARES act we had 97 people on the US

02:17:03 Senate vote for it. Everybody here? There's only one member. Of Congress that voted against it, I

02:17:07 believe. And Project Warp Speed had CDC, FDA, NIH, and Barda very much in the mix now. Some people

02:17:15 think that you're going to come in here.

02:17:18 And insert yourself into those agencies in a way that's never been done before. Let's. Say that

02:17:23 they're a part of a future project. Warp speed. Is that your intent? To go in and do something.

02:17:30 That's never been done before. Based on my staff's research and insert yourself in a discussion of

02:17:35 the scientists are dealing with in those different agencies. No senator.

02:17:41 What I want to do is I'm not a scientist. I want to win power sciences. I want to make sure.

02:17:47 That science is unobstructed by vests that are economic interest. That's good. I'll just say about

02:17:54 operational warp speed.

02:17:57 It was an extraordinary accomplishment. Demonstration of leadership by President Trump.

02:18:03 When he promoted operational warp speed. He was looking at all of the different remedies, including.

02:18:09 Vaccines. Therapeutics. Therapeutic. Ivory. Magnetoxochloroquine, femtitivine chlorine. Dioxide.

02:18:16 And he was not looking at shutting down our country for the year, forcing people to wear masks. For

02:18:22 a year.

02:18:24 Forcing all social distancing that did not have any scientific basis which Dr. Fauci has now

02:18:30 acknowledged. He said we took it out of thin air.

02:18:36 But all of those changed during the Biden administration.

02:18:41 Became very narrowly focused. We ended up with the worst, the highest death count of any country in

02:18:46 the world. Ms. Chair, if I can just ask one final question, and I think it's. A one word answer.

02:18:51 I've heard a lot of people complaining about health care delivery, Medicaid.

02:18:57 On the other side of the dyess here, who's been responsible for health care policies. Over the last

02:19:03 four years.

02:19:06 I mean, the president, the biden, okay.

02:19:10 I'd like to have heard more of those in oversight hearings over the last four years. I haven't, but

02:19:14 I'm glad that there's an acknowledgment that you're inheriting a problem that needs to be fixed.

02:19:19 Thank you. Thank you senator. Senator Sanders. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kennedy, thanks for

02:19:26 being with us.

02:19:29 I very much like the slogan that you coined. Make America healthy again.

02:19:36 And I strongly agree with. That effort.

02:19:41 Despite spending, as you indicated, two or three times as much per capita and healthcare as other

02:19:45 nations.

02:19:47 We have 85 million people who are uninsured, underinsured. We have all kinds of chronic illnesses,

02:19:53 our life expectancy is lower than other countries. And for working class people in this country.

02:19:59 They are living six, seven years shorter lives than the top 1%. We got a problem. Okay. And I'm

02:20:05 going to suggest some ideas that I think can remedy that.

02:20:11 Last year, the insurance industry in this country made over.

02:20:15 \$70 billion. While at the same time, 85 million Americans uninsured or underinsured,

02:20:22 Do you agree with me that the United States should join every other major country on earth and

02:20:29 guarantee health care to all people as a human, right? Yes. No.

02:20:39 Senator, I can't give you a yes or no.

02:20:42 Answer that question. How care are human right? Is healthcare human right?

02:20:47 In the way that free speech, the human right.

02:20:51 I would say it's different because. If with free speech doesn't cost anybody anything. But in

02:20:58 healthcare,

02:21:00 If you smoke cigarettes for 20 years and you get cancer.

02:21:06 You are now taking from the pool.

02:21:10 Are you guaranteed the same?

02:21:13 I'm sorry. I'd love to talk for an hour with you. We got a few minutes left here.

02:21:19 All right. Every other country I know says health care, whether you're poor or rich, younger. Old to

02:21:23 human right. I'm not hearing you say that. All right, you've talked. About the drug companies, and

02:21:27 maybe we agree on this one. As you will know, despite the drug companies making over 100 billion in

02:21:33 profits, paying CEOs outrageous compensation packages. We, in some cases. Pay ten times more for the

02:21:40 same drug.

02:21:42 Will you support legislation that I will introduce which says that in America we should not be

02:21:47 paying a nickel more for prescription drugs than people around the rest of the world. Yes. No.

02:21:54 To equalize it. Not to equalize it, that we should not be paying more than other countries for the

02:22:01 same damn drug.

02:22:03 President trump.

02:22:05 Has asked me. In fact, I had a meeting with President Trump a week ago where we showed him the

02:22:12 charts.

02:22:14 He knows the charts. Paying ten times more from Europe. That's right.

02:22:18 And are you going to commit to us that you will end that absurdity? I think in principle we can. We

02:22:25 should end that disparity. Good. Okay. That's great. All right.

02:22:29 I happen to believe that climate change is real. It's an existential threat, and it is a health care

02:22:37 issue.

02:22:39 Donald Trump thinks that it is a hoax originating in China. Question is, in your judgment, is

02:22:46 climate change a hoax or is it real? Causing devastating problems. President Trump and I, from the

02:22:53 beginning, from our first meeting agreed to disagree on that issue.

02:22:58 I believe climate change.

02:23:00 My job is to make Americans healthy again.

02:23:05 You disagree with Trump? You don't think climate change is a hoax is what I'm hearing. My job here

02:23:11 is to ask you. Not a true question. I answered a question, senator. Okay, you disagree with the

02:23:16 precedent on that? I answered your question.

02:23:19 Okay, I'm going to pick up on a point that Senator Hassen made. Look, there. Is no question.

02:23:26 That abortion is a divisive issue in this country.

02:23:29 I would say a majority of the people are pro choice. There's a strong minority who are pro life. A

02:23:36 year and a half ago, you went to New Hampshire.

02:23:39 Running for president.

02:23:41 Gave a speech and you talked about government should not tell a woman what she can do with. Her own

02:23:47 body. That's her choice.

02:23:50 Now, I think everybody on that side is pro life. I think everybody here is pro choice. I have never

02:23:56 seen any major politician flip on that issue quite as quickly as you did when Trump asked you to

02:24:05 become hhs secretary. Tell me why you think people.

02:24:11 Should. Have confidence in your consistency and in your word when you really made a major u turn on.

02:24:18 An issue of that importance in such a short time.

02:24:22 Senator.

02:24:25 I believe, and I've always believed that every abortion is a tragedy.

02:24:29 But you told the people, the new Hampshire, that it was their right. All right, let me do a last

02:24:34 question here, because I'm running out of time.

02:24:36 I think the gist of what you're trying to say today is.

02:24:41 You're really pro vaccine. You want to ask questions?

02:24:44 You have started a group called the Children's Health Defense.

02:24:50 You're the originator, right? Now, as I understand that on their website, they are selling what's

02:24:55 called onesies. These are little things, clothing for babies. One of them is titled unfaxed,

02:25:02 unafraid. Next one. And they sold for \$26 apiece by the way. Next one is.

02:25:09 No vaccine, no problem. Now, you're coming before this committee and you say you are pro. Vaccine.

02:25:15 Just want to ask some questions. And yet your organization is making money selling a child's?

02:25:22 Product to parents for \$26, which cast fundamental doubt.

02:25:28 On the usefulness of vaccines. Can you tell us now that? You are pro vaccine that you're going to

02:25:37 have your organization take these products off the market. Senator. I have no power over that

02:25:41 organization. I'm not part of it. I resigned. From the board. That was just a few months ago. You

02:25:46 founded that. You certainly have power. You can make that. How you support about this.

02:25:53 I have nothing to do with. Are you supportive of these onesies? I'm supportive of. Vaccines are you

02:25:57 supportive of? This closing, which is militantly anti vaccine. I am supportive of vaccines.

02:26:06 I want good science and I want to protect. But you will not tell the organization you founded. Not

02:26:11 to continue selling that product. Thank you, chairman. Senator BlackBerry. Thank you so much, Mr.

02:26:19 Chairman. And thank you so much for being with us today. And I have no doubt that you will be

02:26:26 confirmed and.

02:26:28 You are going to do such a solid job for the people of this country.

02:26:34 And I do have several issues I wanted to talk with you about and didn't have. Time to cover them

02:26:41 all. When we met prior to the meeting. But rural healthcare is very important to me and the people.

02:26:48 Of Tennessee, 78 of our 95 counties are rural counties. Now, over the last few years, we've seen

02:26:55 hospital closures, so we have focused on access in rural areas, and my rural. Health agenda, which

02:27:03 is bipartisan, focuses on innovation, telehealth access points. It focuses on work shortages. And

02:27:13 also Senator Warner and I have together focused on making.
02:27:19 Certain that we address the area wage index and do that
fairly. For our citizens that are in rural
02:27:26 communities. So I would like a commitment from you that
when.
02:27:32 Confirmed. You and your CMS administrator will work with
us to make certain that the area wage
02:27:39 indexed is balanced and that it is fair to rural areas.
02:27:45 Senator, both Dr. Oz and myself recognize that rural
health care is in crisis in this country and
02:27:52 that is catastrophic for our entire country. And I talked
a little bit about.
02:27:58 My commitment to rural health earlier in this hearing.
02:28:03 The regional price points, as you know, are set by
congress.
02:28:09 And not by hhs.
02:28:12 Certainly. And I know Dr. Oz will certainly work with you
to make them sensible.
02:28:19 We look forward to that also, you and I, before you came
forward as the secretary, the nominee. We
02:28:26 had talked.
02:28:28 In years past about over medicating youth and concerns
over that. And I was looking at a report from
02:28:34 Tincare, which is our Medicaid program in Tennessee, and I
was concerned. When I saw a number.
02:28:42 That tincare had spent \$90 million.
02:28:46 In 2024 alone on ADHD, this was 417,000 of our children.
02:28:56 And \$90 million. To me, that is heartbreaking. What is
happening there? So how will you prioritize
02:29:06 oversight of prescribing practices while promoting
alternative solutions? Such as counseling,
02:29:14 behavioral therapies, community based interventions for
our youth. Exactly. And that's the solution.
02:29:23 15% of american youth are now on aderall or some other
ADHD medication.
02:29:30 Even higher percentages are on ssris and benzos.
02:29:35 We are not just medicating our children. We're over
medicating our entire population.
02:29:41 Half the pharmaceutical drugs on earth are now sold here.
70% of the profits from pharmaceutical
02:29:46 companies. Are from the United States, even though we only
have 4.2% of the world's. Population. Not
02:29:53 only that, but it reads and study.
02:29:56 By Cochrane collaboration founder Peter Gaus found that
pharmaceutical drugs are.

02:30:03 The third largest cause of death in our country after heart attacks and cancers. They're not making
02:30:09 us healthier.
02:30:11 We need community health initiatives. We need access to treatment. We need exercise. We need better
02:30:16 food, okay? Let me talk to you about one of those access points in treatment, and this highlights
02:30:23 the problem. We have in the federal Medicaid law. Since Medicaid's enactment, states have been
02:30:29 prohibited from using Medicaid funds for care provided by institutions for mental disease. We refer
02:30:36 to them as IMds. These are psychiatric hospitals. Residential treatment facilities with more than.
02:30:44 16 beds. This is a discriminatory exclusion.
02:30:50 And. It denies payment for medically necessary care based on the illness that is being treated, and
02:30:57 it has perpetuated unequal coverage. In mental health care. So if you're confirmed. When you're
02:31:03 confirmed, will you commit? To working with me on repealing this discriminatory exclusion and
02:31:11 ensuring equal access to mental health care for Medicaid beneficiaries. Yes.
02:31:18 Thank you so much. I've got a question on PBM reform one on artificial intelligence. In healthcare.
02:31:25 In the interest of time, I will yield back. I look forward to seeing you help make us healthy again.
02:31:34 Thank you, senator.
02:31:44 Senator luhan.
02:31:46 What?
02:31:49 Excuse me.
02:31:52 I made a mistake. It's Senator Cantwell. Thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
02:31:59 And just congratulations on your nomination, Mr. Kennedy. And I've been absent only because I've
02:32:04 been in another hearing with the nominee to be the commerce secretary, so I will review everything.
02:32:11 That you've said today, and look at that diligently. But one of the things that I wanted to discuss
02:32:17 with you is I represent. A very big innovation state.
02:32:22 An innovation in healthcare, specifically innovation like NIH funding to the Fred Hodgkantsor.
02:32:27 Center.
02:32:29 That helped develop the hpv vaccine, which has the potential to eliminate over 95% of cervical

02:32:34 cancer. NIH also funds a lot of jobs and grants. Nearly
11,000 people in the state of Washington and
02:32:42 over one point.
02:32:45 \$2 billion worth of grants. So while I agree with you on
healthy foods,
02:32:50 I definitely am troubled by the medical research side of
innovation and some of the things that you
02:32:55 have said.
02:32:57 In fact, this issue about laying off 600 employees at NIH.
02:33:02 Or giving the fact that to, quote, give infectious disease
a break for eight years.
02:33:10 So we've had a chance to talk about this a little bit, but
the most striking example of this is when
02:33:16 Covid hit, and we were the first in the nation. We had the
first case, and it really was the fast
02:33:24 response by the University of Washington that really
helped. Save lives. So I just want to know
02:33:32 that, are you aware of how harmful these issues could be
for public health. That public health in
02:33:39 and of itself could be affected by these kind of anti
science views.
02:33:46 Senator.
02:33:48 I have always. Been a science person, a pro science
person. I believe in evidence based medicine.
02:33:56 And gold standard science.
02:33:58 I said, and I've explained this before, you came in. At
600 people out of.
02:34:05 A workforce of 91,000.
02:34:08 Is pretty difficult. Last year alone.
02:34:11 President Biden.
02:34:13 Replaced 3000 people at HHS, at 700 at NIH. I want to say
this.
02:34:20 I said give infectious disease a break, because that's
been the principal preoccupation.
02:34:25 Infectious disease.
02:34:27 Chronic disease is 92% accounts for 92% of deaths in this
country, and almost nothing is studied at
02:34:35 NIH about the ideology of our chronic disease epidemic.
But right now, money is going to infectious
02:34:40 disease. I get your point. It's an interesting point. The
problem is.
02:34:47 We had to respond. It's actually the Gates foundation and
a flu cohort that figured out what was
02:34:53 wrong. And that we had an outbreak of Covid that was going
beyond the very first case and so we had

02:34:59 to build a very fast response. So I take this, too. The University of Washington has conducted

02:35:05 groundbreaking stem cell research on fetal. Tissue to me. I know there's probably a lot of people

02:35:11 that may not agree with this, but we're making regenerative heart tissue now at the University of

02:35:15 Washington, so. Yes or no? Do you commit to protecting stem cell research for scientific agencies?

02:35:22 If confirmed,

02:35:24 Iowa protects research.

02:35:28 Stem cell research today.

02:35:31 Can be done on umbilical cords, and you don't need fetal tissue.

02:35:36 You'll protect the laws that are on the books today and the research.

02:35:40 My job is under to enforce the law. Okay? So I want to move to pbms. Because pbms are driving up

02:35:47 drug prices, and one of the biggest things that we need to do here, I think, in a new administration

02:35:52 is get a handle on everything that is driving up prices and lower them. The report found that pbms

02:35:57 generated \$1.4 billion. From spread pricing. That is where they are able to basically set the price,

02:36:07 not reimburse. Pharmacies and then pocket the rest. We've had bipartisan legislation in several

02:36:13 different committees now to get at this. What do you think the solution is?

02:36:19 One of the really notable achievements of this panel.

02:36:25 Was the PBM legislation that they put together. In a bipartisan way. I haven't met a single senator

02:36:31 who actually won. Only.

02:36:35 But. The 60 odd senators that I talked to, all of them talked about bbms and how important it was,

02:36:39 and.

02:36:42 President trump. His first administration.

02:36:45 Pushed through a law.

02:36:47 Or pushed a law to give transparency to bbms. It got overruled during the Biden administration.

02:36:53 Luckily, this panel is resuscitating that President Trump is absolutely committed to fixing the

02:36:59 pbms. My time is running out. So I just want to clarify. You believe that? We should pass these laws

02:37:05 that now have been proposed in the. City. I haven't read the entire law, so I don't know, but I

02:37:10 think that we need to reform the pbms. I think we need.

02:37:16 All of these vested interests that are draining money from the system. Okay. Somebody suggested,
02:37:20 though, that you thought.
02:37:22 You should convene the pbms and talk to them about some sort of self. Regulation. So I am trying to
02:37:28 distinguish between these people who basically are doing illegal activities and ripping off. Really?
02:37:34 They're creating pharmacy deserts in my state. So I'm asking you whether you believe that we have to
02:37:40 legislate in this area.
02:37:43 Again. I'm not being evasive. I just don't know exactly what the law says.
02:37:49 I met with the PBMs, I met with Pharma. My job is to meet with all the stakeholders. I've been
02:37:55 meeting with stakeholders for 40 years, people I was suing people. You want to hear from the other
02:38:01 side. Well, it doesn't mean I would let the BBMs write their own ticket. I think. I support the
02:38:08 efforts of this committee to come up with bipartisan legislation. President Trump wants. To get the
02:38:15 excess profits away from the pbms and send it back to primary care. To patients in this country and
02:38:21 high quality. I'll ask you for the record, since my time has expired to look at the legislation that
02:38:27 came out of the commerce committee that defined the legal activities that they are doing to drive up
02:38:32 prices and get us an answer for the record. Thank you. Mr. In principle, I support that legislation.
02:38:38 Thank you. And let me just tell you the list as we have to move forward to the ending here.
02:38:46 Senator Luhan will be next, followed by Senator Marshall, Senator Warnock, Senator Smith, Senator
02:38:53 young and Senator Welch. And let me say again, Mr. Chairman, this is a matter of such
02:39:00 importance. A number of my colleagues would like a second round, and I think it would be important.
02:39:05 To offer.
02:39:08 Say? A modest amount of additional time to get into this on both sides. I know I have some
02:39:12 questions. I want my colleagues to have the opportunity to raise their concerns as well. Well, I've
02:39:19 said, as I have indicated to you, Senator White, and I'm not going to do a second round. I have been
02:39:25 very generous with the senators. I think almost every single senator has had seven minutes. At

02:39:30 least.

02:39:31 And I will give you a second, as is our practice. I'll then divide my time up with my colleagues.

02:39:39 Okay? You are welcome to do that. Thank you.

02:39:42 Senator lujan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Kennedy.

02:39:48 When we met, you stated to me that it is not your goal to take away programs that work for

02:39:54 Americans. Do you stand by that statement?

02:39:57 Yes, senator. Mr. Kennedy. Gino, how many Americans rely on Medicaid?

02:40:06 About 72 million.

02:40:09 Plus the 7 million kids who are on chips. Appreciate that. 72 million. Yes or no, is it? Important

02:40:14 that expected mothers and newborns have access to health coverage.

02:40:21 Is it important that expectant mothers and newborns have access to health coverage? Absolutely,

02:40:27 senator. Mr. Kennedy. Do you know how many babies born in this country are covered through Medicaid?

02:40:36 I would guess.

02:40:38 I don't know the answer, I would guess.

02:40:41 About.

02:40:43 30 million. I have it, Mr. Kennedy. About 41%, or 1.4 million babies births are financed by

02:40:51 Medicaid, according to the National center for Health Statistics. Yes or no? Do you believe that

02:40:57 Medicaid is a critical program?

02:41:01 I believe.

02:41:03 That. Medicaid. Is. A critical program. But that it's not working as well as it ought to be. And

02:41:11 President Trump has asked me to make it, to make it work better that most Americans are not happy

02:41:17 with the premiums are too high, the deductibles are too high.

02:41:22 And everybody's getting sick or too much money is going to.

02:41:27 Insurance industry. I have a series of yes or no questions. They're pretty simple. Because you heard

02:41:33 we're not going to get a second round of questions. I ask for your indulgence. To be able to get

02:41:37 through them. Yes or no?

02:41:40 In New Mexico, as you know, Medicaid is often measured state by state. It might surprise you. If you

02:41:45 look at some of those surveys in New Mexico, the response was 90% of New Mexicans on Medicaid report

02:41:50 satisfaction getting care 80% getting specialist care 85%
getting urgent care 95% ease of filings,
02:41:57 out of focus. Not to pick on any one. Of my colle.
Colleagues. But in Louisiana, 86% of people on
02:42:02 Medicaid are satisfied with their interactions 83% are
satisfied getting care 85% are satisfied
02:42:08 getting specialized care 82% getting urgent care. I can go
on state by state, but we don't have the
02:42:12 time today. Yes or no? Do you support cutting Medicaid or
reducing.
02:42:21 And especially in an area where you and I spoke about with
the federal investment in Medicaid. Which
02:42:26 is known as fmem. I'm going to call it a restroom break.
President Trump has not told me that he
02:42:32 wants gut Medicaid. He's told me to make it better.
02:42:37 Do you support cutting, yes or no?
02:42:40 Let me ask you this. It's only about presence. I support
making it better. Senator, if President
02:42:46 Trump asks you to. Cut Medicaid. Will you do it? It's not
up to me to cut Medicaid. It would be up
02:42:50 to Congress.
02:42:55 Mr. Kenny. You don't want to answer, I'll move on.
02:42:59 Do you know how many states. Will end. Mr. Chairman, if I
may pause my time. So I understand that
02:43:05 people are getting asked to leave if they stand up with
signs, but there's a lot of other as well.
02:43:10 Mr. Chairman. It needs to be extended to everyone. As Mr.
Kennedy said, we should respect each
02:43:16 other. When we have a difference of opinion. We're just
trying to do our jobs here and trying to ask
02:43:20 questions, that's all. And that's all I'm. Doing with Mr.
Kennedy, folks, so we can Senator Lujan,
02:43:24 you are right. And I ask the audience to please be
respectful. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate
02:43:28 that very much.
02:43:30 Mr. Kennedy, do you know how many states will end their
Medicaid expansion if the federal sheriff.
02:43:35 Medicaid drops.
02:43:39 Well, there's 40 states that.
02:43:43 Have signed under the expansion.
02:43:46 It's a smaller number, so it's nine states would quickly
have to end their expansion because of the
02:43:52 laws that they have. That's about 4 million folks across
the country and in New Mexico, Iowa and

02:43:58 Idaho, they have triggers that it would immediately have to go into effect if, in fact, that gets

02:44:04 cut. The reason I'm asking those questions is there's been a lot of chatter and conversations.

02:44:09 Around Medicaid now. I agree. We can always do better. And we must be doing better. In Americ.

02:44:14 America. But Medicaid has been shown to improve health outcomes, including mortality, quality of

02:44:20 life, and access to preventative care.

02:44:23 As well. And there are some areas, Mr. Kennedy, that you and I touched on specific to native

02:44:28 american communities.

02:44:32 One of the concerns that I have are these programs matter to folks. You shared your passion about

02:44:39 caring for folks. I believed that passion.

02:44:44 My question in this area is, as you know, when folks are doing research,

02:44:50 And they're going to check to see if medicine works on someone if they're not included in that

02:44:55 trial. It often doesn't help them. That's what all the evidence shows.

02:45:00 So.

02:45:02 What are you going to do when programs are eliminated?

02:45:06 To. Require the inclusion of Native Americans in clinical trials when it comes to life saving

02:45:13 medicine.

02:45:15 I'm going to do everything I can to make sure there's Native Americans clinical trials.

02:45:21 As I said to you when I visit your office,

02:45:24 I spent 20% of my career working on native issues.

02:45:29 My family's been deeply involved with my family. Father and uncle were big critics of the indian

02:45:34 health service.

02:45:37 Failure. To deliver good health.

02:45:40 Results or health care. On the reservations. I'm going to. Bring a native and for the first time in

02:45:46 history, into my central office. That all the major decisions in my office.

02:45:53 Will be that.

02:45:56 He. Or he interviewed candidate, a very, very good candidate. Or have direct impact on all the major

02:46:03 officers. And one of my priorities is I appreciate that. I have a follow up in that space.

02:46:08 Specifically, will you commit to finalizing the congressionally mandated FDA guidance to increase

02:46:14 clinical trial diversity.

02:46:17 Just repeat that again? I'm sorry. You commit to finalizing the congressionally mandated FDA.

02:46:22 Guidance.

02:46:25 To. Increasing clinical trial diversity.

02:46:29 Yes, I appreciate that. Will you commit to reinstating all of the pages that were eliminated? And

02:46:35 people that were fired from this administration that have this responsibility. I cannot commit to

02:46:41 that because I don't even know who they are.

02:46:44 Working with you to make sure those positions are adequately staffed. I will follow up in writing in

02:46:50 those specific areas because I think there's some commonality here. But answers matter, and so I'd

02:46:55 like to get those as timely as possible. The last thing, Mr. Chairman, that I'll say is one of the

02:47:01 conversations I had last before. This hearing was with a family that I've been working with.

02:47:09 To work with my republican colleagues when it comes to autism and federal programs. And making a

02:47:15 difference in these families lives, in this little girl's life. What I'm asking now, Mr. Chairman,

02:47:20 is unanimous consent to enter into the record an article from autism speaks. Titled, quote, do

02:47:26 vaccines cause autism? End quote. And I'll note that the first sentence states, quote vaccines. Do

02:47:35 not cause autism. End quote. Thank you. I yield back without objection.

02:47:41 And before we move on, We've had a request from several quarters for. A quick restroom break. We

02:47:47 will take a five minute recess. I'm sorry. To those remaining five or six senators who must wait a

02:47:53 few minutes. But we will have a quick break. We will be back as soon as we can.

02:48:41 It's a nightmare. It's a nightmare. I ended up in a wheelchair, completely seized. Up. Thought I was

02:48:46 stroking. Couldn't walk. We learned how to walk. Games. Kidneys are. Shutting down.

02:48:52 Pfizer Covid vaccinations. She never woke up.

02:48:57 This is the light that I have. Now is when you start thinking, how do I end my life, something

02:49:01 really sinister, really, really similar to what's going on. These were fundamental violations of

02:49:06 human rights. So we're here at children's house offend all going to go. Back out on the road. We are

02:49:12 going to have to fix it. Every single one of you. What have you been through? Those are my. Eyes.

02:49:17 This is a huge humor. This is the bottom plane long that is filled with blood. They said it was the

02:49:23 most aggressive cancer that they've seen. I held on to my husband. For the very last time. And I

02:49:29 stayed with him until his body got cold. I hadn't. Told him that I loved him.

02:49:34 Not to be afraid. What have your children be through, Covid, through all of the issues that we've

02:49:41 had. Over these last few years. We want to hear all of your stories. It was hard seeing 25. Year

02:49:45 olds coming in with heart attacks, with strokes because they received the vaccine. The success rate

02:49:51 of these patients getting better was next to zero.

02:49:55 There's something wrong. Something has happened and you have to consider the vaccine. This is a

02:49:59 pandemic of the unvaccinated. You shut up here. And you're unvaccinated, you will. Suffer for having

02:50:07 not done what we had to do.

02:50:10 That to me was a crime against humanity and a violation of my oath. We will continue, children's.

02:50:14 Health defense will continue and we will not stop until the justice and it's never, ever happens

02:50:20 again.

02:51:01 You're watching CHDV bringing you up to the minute programming you won't. See anywhere else. All of

02:51:07 our shows are completely user supported and rely on generous support from viewers. Like you. Every

02:51:13 dollar you give helps us broadcast the truth to countless viewers around the world. This is

02:51:18 incredibly important, world shaking stuff that's going on right now. Health is now going to become

02:51:23 the searching out and the dealing with pandemics. This is the grossest violation of the Nuremberg

02:51:29 code. This is total control.

02:51:32 And we reject it. We embrace freedom. We have now people in positions of medical authority who are

02:51:37 directly lying to the american public and the public at large.

02:51:42 There's a bigger agenda driving this, and this agenda is about life and death, you guys. Have been

02:51:46 proven right. It's unreal. I'm never taking another vaccine again. My whole life. Please consider

02:51:51 making a contribution today to keep this one of a kind programming going strong. Thank you.

02:52:30 I'm a single father.

02:52:33 Raising a 15 year old.

02:52:36 Severely autistic nonverbal. Teenage daughter. When she was 15 months old, she received a round of

02:52:43 vaccines that included the MMR and the DtAp. She developed a high fever. The fever broke. She lost

02:52:51 everything. My daughter. Was six weeks old when I took her in for her vaccination. 2 hours later,

02:52:56 she had five minute seizure, and 2 hours after that she had. Another fight in the future.

02:53:26 This committee will.

02:53:29 Continue and come out of recess and go back into session. Before we go to youth, Senator Marshall.

02:53:33 I'd like to just tell everybody the remaining list. Senator Marshall, Senator Warnock. Senator

02:53:38 Smith. Senator Young and Senator Welch, and then.

02:53:42 I did indicate earlier that I would give another five minutes to Senator Wyden. I understand. He has

02:53:47 distributed that five minutes to a few of the other senators, so we will have a few more quick

02:53:51 questions.

02:53:53 And then we will proceed. And I would like to thank the audience again. I know we had a couple of

02:53:57 outbursts earlier, but I want to thank the audience for being respectful and encourage the audience

02:54:03 to continue to be respectful as we conclude the hearing with that. Senator Marshall, thank you.

02:54:11 Chairman.

02:54:12 Obesity.

02:54:14 Diabetes, heart disease.

02:54:17 Obesity, diabetes, heart disease account for probably 80% of health challenges in America.

02:54:27 You. Many times I heard my friends across the aisle mention any three of those.

02:54:31 I don't know if we've lost the force for the trees here. Vaccine is a critical issue. I understand

02:54:36 that. I don't see how Mr. Kennedy's position could. Be any more clear that he's going to support the

02:54:42 vaccines, he's going to support the science and empowerment to parents and their doctors to make

02:54:47 these choices.

02:54:50 60% of Americans have a chronic disease, that there's an epidemic of chronic diseases across the

02:54:56 country.

02:54:58 And this make America healthy. Good movement is palpable to me. It started on the campaign. Trail in

02:55:03 2020 when moms I'd never met that never involved in the political process. Came up to me and said,

02:55:10 look. I want to make these choices about my children with my doctor, not the federal government that

02:55:16 it's a very real thing. Moms, dads, grandparents across the country grab me and say,

02:55:23 Look, why do 20% of our children now? Why are they on a prescription drug?

02:55:28 So, Mr. Kennedy.

02:55:31 What is your prescription to help make America healthy again? What's your vision? What does that

02:55:35 look like to you?

02:55:40 Thank you, Senator Marshall.

02:55:45 We're having epidemics of all these chronic illnesses, autoimmune diseases, neurological diseases.

02:55:54 Allergic diseases, obesity. When my uncle was president, 3% of Americans were obese.

02:56:03 Today, 74% Americans are overbees, are overweight. No other country has anything like this.

02:56:11 In japan, the opc rate is still 3%.

02:56:15 And epidemics are not caused by genes. Genes may provide the vulnerability, but you need an

02:56:23 environmental toxin.

02:56:26 Something is poisoning the american people. And we know that the primary culprits.

02:56:32 Are changing food supply. The switch.

02:56:35 To highly chemical intensive processed foods.

02:56:40 We have 10,000 ingredients in our country, in our foods. Europeans have only 400. If you buy

02:56:47 McDonald's french fries. In our country there is eleven ingredients. My understanding in Europe

02:56:53 there's only three. If you buy fruit loops in our country, they're loaded with food ties with the

02:56:59 yellow. Dye red, tie blue die and many other ingredients.

02:57:03 The same company makes the same product.

02:57:07 With different ingredients for Canada and Europe.

02:57:10 And at age we don't have good science on all these things.

02:57:15 And that is deliberate. That's a deliberate choice. Not to study the things that are truly making us

02:57:22 sick, that are not only contributing to chronic disease.

02:57:26 Up to mortalities from infectious disease. We need to get a handle on, because if we don't it's an

02:57:32 existential threat. Our country is not going to be
destroyed because we get the marginal tax rate
02:57:38 wrong or because we get one of these culture war issues
that we've been talking about today wrong.
02:57:44 It's going to be destroyed.
02:57:47 If we continue down this trajectory of chronic disease, we
need to fix our food supply and that's
02:57:51 the number one. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy.
02:57:56 Certainly I share your concern with alter processed foods.
On the other end of this food chain are
02:57:59 my farmers and ranchers back home.
02:58:03 Would you just take a second and share?
02:58:06 Your compassion, how you feel about farmers and ranchers,
that they respond to the market. They
02:58:10 don't dictate the market. They grow what the market is
wanting them to, to grow.
02:58:17 Senator.
02:58:19 Hawley told me the other day.
02:58:21 His brother in laws are all farmers, and he said four out
of every five of his brother. In laws.
02:58:30 Has Parkinson's disease. And that kind of cluster we're
seeing across farm country of cancer's,
02:58:36 autoimmune diseases, obesity, et cetera.
02:58:42 And we can now not export american food to Europe. There's
a Europeans won't take our food. That's
02:58:49 not good for farmers.
02:58:51 Or also destroying our soil because some of the chemicals
that farmers use destroy the microbe.
02:58:58 And that caused the erosion of the soil. You can't get
water infiltration.
02:59:04 Water pools up and it washes the soil off. Agronomists now
estimate that.
02:59:10 If we continue doing these processes.
02:59:13 Only 60 harvests left before our soil is gone.
02:59:18 Farmers.
02:59:20 Are using.
02:59:22 Seeds and cabbage.
02:59:27 Over the long term are causing them and us. And what we
need to do is we need to support the
02:59:34 farmers.
02:59:36 We need the farmers as partners if we're going to make
them.
02:59:41 Work. And I don't want a single farmer to go out of
business under our watch. I don't regulate far
02:59:47 if I'm privileged to be confirmed.

02:59:50 Not regulating farms. That's under USDA. But I want to partner with all of my decisions with USDA

02:59:58 and with the farm community to make sure that we don't lose. More farmers in this country.

03:00:05 We also transition.

03:00:08 We offer and incentivize transitions to regenerative agriculture.

03:00:13 To no till agriculture and.

03:00:17 To less chemically intense, by the way.

03:00:20 I've also met with the chemical industry and the fertilizer and herbicide companies. And they want

03:00:26 to do the same thing.

03:00:29 And I think we're on the trajectory to do that, and we need to incentivize.

03:00:35 Initiatives to accelerate that trajectory. Mr. Chairman, if I could. The great news is that my

03:00:40 farmers in Kansas. Are selling products to Europe that today's regenerative practices.

03:00:49 Soil health, all those things are priorities for Kansas farmers. Many of us are doing many of those

03:00:54 things already. We just need it to be more widespread. If I could just wrap up my remarks. Though,

03:00:59 is that again going back to the big picture here, 60% of Americans have a chronic disease. Mr.

03:01:06 Kennedy, I believe for such a time as this that you're not just one of 300 million people. I think

03:01:10 that you are the person to lead. HHS to make America healthy again, that God has a divine purpose

03:01:17 for you and I look forward to your confirmation in working with you to make America healthy again.

03:01:22 Thank you.

03:01:26 Senator warnock.

03:01:29 Thank you so much, chairman Krapo and ranking member wide. And it's great to be here. Mr. Kennedy,

03:01:34 welcome.

03:01:36 To un and to your family. Thank you for meeting with me a few days ago.

03:01:42 I'd like to follow up, if I might, with some of the issues that we discussed. In my office.

03:01:49 I want to talk to you first about?

03:01:52 The cdc or the centers for disease control and prevention. I'm proud of the work that the CDC does,

03:01:59 proud that it's located.

03:02:02 In Georgia. With more than 10,000 employees in my state.

03:02:09 If confirmed, you would be the cabinet secretary over the CDC.

03:02:16 Representing hhs. It's about 29% of the federal budget CDC is a part of. That. Do you agree that the

03:02:22 CDC's work is critical to Georgia, critical for our country?

03:02:29 And the health of the entire world. Yes, senator. Senator Isaacson, my republican predecessor, would

03:02:37 agree. Would have agreed with that. Bless his memory. He was a fierce advocate for the CDC. As an I.

03:02:45 The CDC is an agency filled with hard working.

03:02:49 Dedicated public health servants.

03:02:53 They wake up every single day.

03:02:55 Working to keep us safe. I think. We don't think often enough about their work.

03:03:01 Because it's easy not to celebrate the folks who are protecting you from that, which doesn't appear

03:03:05 because of the work that they're doing. So grateful for the work that the CDC employees do. Some of

03:03:10 them are members of my church. I saw that deep commitment firsthand. When I visited the CDC just

03:03:17 last summer.

03:03:19 Mr. Kennedy, you have compared the CDC's work to Noxy death camps.

03:03:27 You've compared it to sexual abusers in the catholic church.

03:03:33 You've also said that many of them belong. This is a direct quote. Many of them. Belong in jail.

03:03:40 For me. Those are disturbing characterizations of the CDC workers that I know who are trying to keep

03:03:47 the american public safe every single day. And as you are presenting us the nominee for this

03:03:54 position, I need to know, do you stand? By those statements that you made in the past, or do you

03:04:01 attract those previous statements? Senator. I don't believe that.

03:04:07 Ever compared the CDC to nazi death camps.

03:04:12 I support the CDC. My job is not dismantle or harm that CDC. My job is to empower the scientist if

03:04:19 I'm privileged to be confirmed. So you retract those statements. I'm not retracting it. I never

03:04:25 said. It? Well, actually, I have a transcript. Of me saying that it's a.

03:04:31 Let me. Let me read your words. Says that the institution, CDC and the vaccine program is your.

03:04:37 Description of their work is more important than the children that is supposed to protect and, you
03:04:42 know, it's the same reason we had a pedophile scandal in the catholic church. It's because people
03:04:46 were able to convince themselves that the institution of the church. Was more important than these
03:04:52 little boys and girls who were being.
03:04:56 Raped. That's pretty provocative language you said in another statement to me.
03:05:02 This is like Noxy death camp.
03:05:06 Let me finish. I'm just reading your words. I mean, what happens? What happened to these? Kids.
03:05:11 One in 31 boys in this country.
03:05:14 Their minds are being robbed from them.
03:05:18 Yeah. I was not comparing the CDC to nazi death camps. I was comparing the injury rate to our
03:05:25 children to other atrocities.
03:05:29 And I wouldn't compare. Of course, the CDC.
03:05:33 Deficiency to the extent.
03:05:37 At any statement that I made has been interpreted that way. Yeah, I don't agree with that.
03:05:44 In 2003.
03:05:46 United States Congress government Oversight Committee.
03:05:52 Ended.
03:05:55 An over a year investigation. That CD is.
03:05:59 Almost that same language. They said that.
03:06:02 Just one division, one branch. Immunization safety office. Had put institutional self interests and
03:06:10 pharmaceutical.
03:06:12 Prophets ahead of the welfare and health american children. So that was a conclusion by Congress.
03:06:21 And I repeated that. I'm asking you because you're the nominee for HHS. It sounds like you stand by
03:06:27 those statements. Senator, my objective is to support CDC.
03:06:33 There's nothing I'm going to do that is going to harm cds I want to make sure that our science is
03:06:37 gold standard science.
03:06:40 And it's free from.
03:06:42 That same government oversight investigation committee.
03:06:46 At the panels, the asip panel within cdc.
03:06:51 I think 97% of the people on it had conflicts. I don't believe that that's right. I think we need to
03:06:57 end those conflicts and make sure that scientists are doing unobstructed science.

03:07:02 I want to enter this statement, by the way, into the record without objection. Without objection.

03:07:07 Last week, the White House gagged HHS and the CDC, preventing them from communicating all.

03:07:15 Important public health information to anyone, including all of our allies, including our allies in

03:07:20 the United States. And global disease prevention. Can you just answer yes or no, because I'm running

03:07:25 out of time. Do you agree with that action?

03:07:28 I was not consultant on it, but that's pretty much standard operating procedure for incoming

03:07:32 administration. So you agree with the action that gagged HHS and CDC from communicating important.

03:07:41 Public health information.

03:07:43 That directive made sure that no.

03:07:48 Public health.

03:07:50 And mass communications.

03:07:53 Were temporarily suspended.

03:07:57 A confirmation of a new HHS secretary. This is standard operating procedure.

03:08:03 I get it. I don't think what we've seen over the last several days.

03:08:08 Is standard.

03:08:10 Operation for new administration. I think we're seeing some unprecedented actions. But you agree

03:08:14 with it? Last night.

03:08:17 Members of the CDC, along with other federal employees.

03:08:22 Were actually invited.

03:08:24 To resign these buyouts. And I got text messages and folks I know were from. The CDC that do this

03:08:31 important work, who got that note. And it's really important because my experience is that when you

03:08:36 send out that kind of note, the folks who resign.

03:08:40 Are the folks who you least likely want to see reside. They got other options.

03:08:45 They're gifted folks. They got a lot of expertise. They have options, a lot of them. Are doing this

03:08:50 work because of their patriotism, because of their commitment. Do you agree with the buyouts that

03:08:56 were presented to CDC employees just last night.

03:09:01 I agree.

03:09:04 As majority of the scientists and experts at CDC are patriot. Servants. Can you tell me? I don't

03:09:11 think anybody's going to resign. Who's? Committed America healthy. Can you just answer yes? Okay.

03:09:16 You agree with the buyouts?

03:09:19 In our meeting, I asked you to confirm your support for the Affordable Care act. You also mentioned

03:09:25 that you and President Trump.

03:09:28 Want to fix the ACA by making premiums more affordable. Can you answer me yes or. No.

03:09:34 I don't have a lot of time.

03:09:38 Did you know that tax credits. That help families afford health insurance and save Georgia's an

03:09:44 average of \$531 per month per person are set to expire at the end of the year. Did you know that? I

03:09:52 do.

03:09:54 We need to move on. Do you support Congress extending these tax credits? So that Americans can

03:10:01 continue to afford health care.

03:10:03 Congress has to make its own decisions about that. My instructions from Mr. Chairman.

03:10:10 I'm having a lot of trouble getting the witness to answer yes or no to a yes or no question?

03:10:16 I've got one more question.

03:10:18 You're almost at nine minutes.

03:10:21 Well, I need him to answer yes or no.

03:10:25 Yes or no?

03:10:26 I'm not going to answer yes or no to a question that's not susceptible. To an honest yes or no

03:10:30 answer. We need to move on.

03:10:34 I think that the fact that you find it difficult to answer basic questions is deeply troubling for

03:10:41 me.

03:10:43 As you present yourself as a nominee to run hhs. Thank you so very much, senator. I've been in

03:10:48 courts all over the country.

03:10:50 And perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you told me I'm out of time and continues to filibuster. Even after I

03:10:55 said, I'm done.

03:10:57 Senator Smith. Mr. Chair. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair. And ranking member.

03:11:02 And welcome Mr. Kennedy.

03:11:04 So, Mr. Kennedy, I don't have a question for you on abortion.

03:11:09 I think that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have covered this, but I want to say I can

03:11:13 respect people who have different views than mine on this issue, but it's hard for me to respect

03:11:18 people who won't give a straight answer to what they think. On this issue in particular, Mr. Chair,

03:11:23 I just want to note that I understand that anti choice advocates have said that in these hearings

03:11:27 they were looking to hear. Mr. Kennedy provide some reassurance that he is on their side and I'm

03:11:32 not. Hearing that, and I think most Americans are looking for some hint that.

03:11:38 The decisions that people make about abortion should be personal and private, and they should be

03:11:43 free to make those decisions without government interference, and I'm not hearing that either. To

03:11:48 make it worse. The answers that you have given tell me that the Trump administration is more than

03:11:53 willing to restrict or even ban medication abortion without a single act of Congress. And even in

03:11:59 states where abortion is legal. And what is clear to me is that you and President Trump are

03:12:05 dangerous to women's. Access to Mifa Pristone having said. That I want to move to a different topic.

03:12:12 Mr. Kennedy, I appreciate Senator Cornyn's questions about mental and behavioral health, something

03:12:17 that I care a lot about. I know that you and your family have had personal experience with mental

03:12:22 health challenges, as have I.

03:12:25 And I agree that the mental health crisis in this country is a crisis. So let me ask you in an

03:12:32 interview in 2023 and again in 2024, you blamed school shootings on antidepressants. You said, and

03:12:39 this is a quote, there is no time in american history. Or human history that kids were going. To

03:12:45 shoot schools and shooting their classmates. It really started happening coterminous with the

03:12:50 introduction of these drugs with Prozac and with other drugs. So do you believe, as you've said that

03:12:56 antidepressants cause school shootings. This should be a simple question. I don't think anybody can

03:13:01 answer that question. And I didn't answer that question. I said, it.

03:13:06 I said it should be studied along with other potential culprits.

03:13:10 So they may call social media.

03:13:13 But I don't know. I would never make. Because there's no science on that. There is, senator.

03:13:20 Kennedy. The science shows that there is no link between school shootings and antidepressants, and

03:13:27 in fact, most school shooters were not even treated with antidepressants, and of those that were.

03:13:32 There was no evidence of association.

03:13:37 Senator, because HIPAA rules. Nobody knows. Well, that is Mr. Kennedy. Do you think that people who

03:13:43 take antidepressants are dangerous?

03:13:47 Kind of charisma. Listen.

03:13:51 I'm not going into hhs if I'm privileged to be confirmed with any.

03:13:56 To impose any preconceived ideas that I may have. I'm just wanting. Good science. So you're not

03:14:02 saying that they aren't dangerous, which means that they. Could be dangerous. Let me ask you this.

03:14:06 That's not true. You've described Americans. Who take mental health medications as addicts who need

03:14:11 to be sent to wellness farms to recover. Is that what you believe? Of course I didn't. Say that

03:14:16 anybody should be compelled to do anything. No, but you said they should be sent.

03:14:21 It should be available to them. I didn't say they should be sent. Sentidepressants are like addicts.

03:14:29 That I can provide that.

03:14:32 Should have the availability. Listen, I know people, including members of my family.

03:14:38 Who've had a much worse time getting off of SSRIs than they did, and people have getting off heroin.

03:14:45 This whole period is.

03:14:48 And it's on the label. I have some experience. Myself, Mr. Kennedy. This is personal for me. When I

03:14:55 was a young woman and I was struggling with depression, thankfully I had the resources to help me

03:15:01 get through it. Including. A new generation of SSRI uptake Reinhib inhibitors, which help to clear

03:15:09 my mind. Get me back on track to being a mom and a wife and a productive, happy person and. I'm

03:15:14 really grateful for that therapy. So I have some experience with this, and I think that everyone

03:15:20 should have access to that care. And your job as secretary is to expand. Access to care not to

03:15:26 spread lies and misinformation and the things that you say Mr. Kennedy. They live on. They have

03:15:34 impact. And we're having this conversation at the same moment. That my republican colleagues are

03:15:40 looking to try to figure out how to save money any way they can. And so they want to cut Medicaid.

03:15:44 Let's just think about this for a minute because you're going to be, should you be confirmed, you

03:15:48 would be responsible for CMS, which provides mental and behavioral health care to millions of

03:15:54 Americans, close to 40% to folks on Medicaid have a behavioral health. Condition, and you would be

03:15:59 part of this administration that would be looking to cut Medicaid. So, Mr. Kennedy, these statements

03:16:07 that you've made linking antidepressants to school shootings. They reinforce the stigma that people

03:16:14 who experience.

03:16:16 Mental health every day, face every single day. And I'm very concerned that this is another example

03:16:21 of your record of sharing false and misleading information that actually really hurts people.

03:16:29 Characterizing my statement. I am only putting into the record what you have said. You're

03:16:35 mischaracterizing my statements.

03:16:38 And I'm happy that you had a good experience on ssris. Many Americans have very good experience on

03:16:44 it. Others have not be an issue between them and their physicians and not.

03:16:50 HHS to be putting out misinformation about the dangers of SSRIs and other antidepressant medication,

03:16:59 spreading the stigma and the fear that we're actually trying to overcome. Do you think physicians,

03:17:05 when they make that prescription, ought to have access to good science? Of course. They do. That's

03:17:10 all I believe to and you and I are in agreement, senator, and to your point that you made when you

03:17:14 made these statements, it was not based on good science. I don't know what it was. I was saying the

03:17:18 science needed to be done. I was saying. These are potential culprits. Coterminists, and I named

03:17:24 other things. I said video games. I said social media. I said, ssris. Ssris have a black box

03:17:31 warning. Warning of suicidal. Mr. Chair. I will submit to the chair the information that I have

03:17:38 about what Mr. Kennedy has. Said, linking antidepressants to school shootings. Thank you.

03:17:45 Senator Young.

03:17:47 Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good to see you. Mr. Kennedy. To follow up on that spirited exchange.

03:17:54 In talking with you and reading about your vision for the department, you said one of your goals is

03:18:00 to return public health agencies to the gold standard of scientific review. You've alluded to the

03:18:06 gold standard a number of times today, so I'm going to give you an opportunity uninterrupted, but

03:18:11 hopefully not. Too extensive to tell me and others what you mean by this gold standard.

03:18:19 The gold standard.

03:18:23 Means real scientific research.

03:18:26 With replication of studies, which very rarely happens now at NIH, we should be giving at least 20%

03:18:33 of the NIH budgets to replication.

03:18:37 We should make sure that all the science is published with the raw data. We should make sure that

03:18:42 the peer reviews are also published.

03:18:46 And I'll give you a quick example. 20 years ago.

03:18:51 NIH scientists did a study on amyloid on Alzheimer's, which they said it was. Caused by amyloid

03:18:58 black. After that, NIH shut down studies of any other hypothesis 20 years. Later. We now know that

03:19:06 those studies were fraudulent. NIH has funded 800 studies on a fraudulent hypothesis. And we've lost

03:19:15 20 years in figuring out how to cure for Alzheimer's and. That's just one example. I can give you

03:19:20 hundreds. We need to end that. We need. To end the old boy system. We need to have replicatable

03:19:26 science.

03:19:28 And be completely transparent about raw data. Thank you, sir.

03:19:33 In recent years, particularly during the Covid pandemic. There's been a lot of skepticism about our

03:19:39 public health institutions. Some of this I would say is warranted, but it's now created.

03:19:46 A pervasive lack of trust from the public that these institutions are acting.

03:19:52 In bad faith or failing to act in objective.

03:19:56 Criteria.

03:19:58 Failing, in short, to act in the best interests of the public. If confirm, Mr. Kenny, how will you

03:20:04 work to regain the public's trust?

03:20:08 I suspect it'll take some time in these important public health institutions.

03:20:12 Through radical transparency. I'm going to make these the reason people don't trust.

03:20:20 The public health agency is because they haven't been trustworthy.

03:20:23 And you gave the example of Covid at the beginning of Covid. Everybody was rushing to get that

03:20:29 vaccine. We had over 90% vaccination uptake. Yes. Sir, CDC's most recent recommendation is that

03:20:37 Americans take the.

03:20:39 Ace booster.

03:20:42 Only 23% of Americans are complying.

03:20:46 77% Americans no longer trust CDC, and that is the problem. Yes, sir. In the absence of full

03:20:53 information.

03:20:57 I think agree with you. But I want your response. Might it make sense to share.

03:21:04 That absence of full information with the american people, that uncertainty. I think one of the

03:21:09 things by observation and experience that I saw during the pandemic was we had certain prominent

03:21:15 doctors appear. On television and indicate.

03:21:19 No, you absolutely must not wear a mask. Two weeks later, it's yes, you must wear. A mask, but they

03:21:24 were certain.

03:21:26 And they even demonized people for not following the latest science, knowing there's a high level of

03:21:30 uncertainty in that science. Would a measure of humility. And as you say, radical transparency

03:21:37 demonstrates humility, help rebuild trust over a period of years. Absolutely. We need to tell

03:21:43 Americans what we don't know.

03:21:46 We need to make sure studies that reach a null hypothesis are also published.

03:21:52 And that doesn't happen.

03:21:55 Sir. I think you are right about why healthcare costs are so high in the first place. The answer is

03:22:01 indeed chronic disease. 90% of our healthcare spending goes towards managing it, as you say in your

03:22:07 open statement. It's not in the main because of waste, fraud and abuse, although we know some exist.

03:22:14 It's not in the main because we have greedy executives. At innovative, world class companies. It's

03:22:21 not in the main because we haven't yet. Adopted an unsustainable Medicare for all skiing. It's

03:22:27 because of this. So I'm encouraged that.

03:22:31 You intend to make that a point of emphasis?

03:22:35 As it pertains to.

03:22:37 Your future leadership. I will say with respect to Covid, it's not over for a lot of Americans. It's
03:22:44 not over. I know. The mission accomplished Banner was convenient for the last administration. But as
03:22:50 we continue to navigate the ongoing impacts of the Covid pandemic, We have many individuals here in
03:22:58 the United States and around the world who are suffering from long term health effects.
03:23:03 That significantly impact their quality of life, work and daily activities, and they've been largely
03:23:08 ignored. Funding for long Covid research was appropriated by Congress in December of 2020, followed
03:23:15 by additional funding directed by the Biden administration in February 2024. Patient groups and
03:23:21 industry publications have criticized. The slow pace of clinical trial design and enrollment. If
03:23:27 confirmed, will you collaborate with healthcare providers, researchers in effective communities to
03:23:32 better understand and mitigate long Covid's impact. Yes or no? Please. Absolutely. There's 16
03:23:38 million Americans. Will you commit to prioritizing long Covid? Research and integr. Integrate this
03:23:44 work in a broader healthcare policies. Yes or no, please.
03:23:48 Yes. Patient groups. Experts in industry publications have raised concerns around existing long
03:23:52 Covid funding being spent on observational research.
03:23:57 In particular, criticism was directed towards recover funding being used to duplicate existing
03:24:02 findings instead of funding trials for potential treatments or diagnostics. If confirm, Mr. Kennedy,
03:24:09 will you work with Congress so that going forward long Covid funding will be directed primarily
03:24:13 towards trial or novel research directions and not. Replicating existing observational research. Yes
03:24:20 or no? Absolutely, Senator. With enthusiasm.
03:24:25 Thank you so much.
03:24:30 If confirmed, how will you create balance between your personal priorities of chronic disease and
03:24:38 healthy lifestyle in the ongoing critical work of the department in areas that are focused on
03:24:44 incentivizing and advancing in. Innovation in modern medicine and pharmaceutical discovery.
03:24:52 Innovation is going to be the key to public health.
03:24:56 And we have a unique opportunity now in history because of AI, because of telemedicine.

03:25:02 And because of the quality of people that are now coming to HHS.

03:25:07 To actually save public health, but it's all going to rely on innovation, and I don't want to do

03:25:12 anything that inhibits or impairs the pace of innovation.

03:25:18 That's encouraging. From approving AI algorithms to determining Medicare coverage. We certainly need

03:25:27 more innovation, and we need good people in the department to assist with that effort. So I'll

03:25:33 follow up with a question about how you're going to attract and retain good people. Thank you,

03:25:36 chairman. Sorry to shut you down a little faster than I did. The other. Senator, we are up against a

03:25:41 vote deadline here.

03:25:44 And we have one more senator who gets his full time. I hope you'll keep it. As close to five minutes

03:25:48 as you can, Senator Welch.

03:25:51 And then I've promised Senator Wyden. What? Five more minutes to be divided, 1 minute with my

03:25:56 colleagues getting, and then if we can. Do that. We can get over to vote before they call the vote

03:26:02 on the floor.

03:26:04 Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Kennedy. And as you know,

03:26:10 Have great reverence for your family.

03:26:14 From Massachusetts. When I got out of college, I was in the first class of Robert Kennedy Fellows.

03:26:20 The memorial. Created by your family to honor the service of your father. I do community organizing.

03:26:28 In the west side of Chicago.

03:26:31 And I certainly admire your energy in your effort here and desire to serve. There's a couple of

03:26:38 things that are really important here.

03:26:41 This is not just about a debate on vaccines. It's a debate.

03:26:46 About.

03:26:47 Qualifications, experience.

03:26:50 And priorities as to the person that.

03:26:54 Will head health and human services.

03:26:57 And it's not just about what your answers are today or what the questions are, it obviously has a

03:27:02 lot to do with your whole record in your whole history.

03:27:07 Your sister in her letter. Pardon me? Your cousin in her letter said you've always been.

03:27:13 Charismatic, able to attract others through the strength
of your personality, willingness to take
03:27:18 risk and break rules.
03:27:21 That's, I guess, an attribute, but it can be a danger. The
question I fundamentally have is.
03:27:28 Whether. Your willingness to disrupt and maybe break rules
is going to be dangerous and destructive.
03:27:35 The character questions. We didn't go into here, but
there's some sketchy things. You've
03:27:39 acknowledged your history with heroin. You've gotten over
that. But there's incidents that do, I
03:27:46 think, concern the question of whether the stability is
there to be in charge. Of this major
03:27:52 organization.
03:27:54 And that's compounded by my concern that you don't have
any experience managing. A large
03:27:58 organization that you don't have any experience.
03:28:02 In government. So those are things that have to be taken
into account. But the issue for me is also
03:28:07 priority. So a lot of your engagement in health has been
on vaccines. Big important issue. You
03:28:13 actually disagreed, as I understand it, with President
Trump, about Operation Warp, warp speed. I
03:28:18 think President Trump deserves a lot of credit for oper.
Operation Warp speed. He knew we had to get
03:28:24 a vaccine. And these other issues about a mask and whether
you should wear it, whether, when you got
03:28:29 your groceries. The bag had to be left outside. Remember
that in the very beginning. Those are
03:28:35 incidental to the core question that the president
believed we had to have a vaccine. And you
03:28:40 contested that. That worries me. That really deeply
worries me.
03:28:46 The other. Questions. Senator Cassidy asks you some
questions about our health care system. I happen
03:28:52 to believe that our health care system is profoundly
broken, and it's not just about the chronic
03:28:57 illnesses that's about our diet. That's about our
exercise. But we are getting premium increases in
03:29:03 Vermont. Of 20% a year. 25% a year, and it's busting. The
bank for taxpayers. It's busting the bank
03:29:10 for our wonderful Vermont employers who care. About
having. Health insurance they can provide to
03:29:17 their employees. Senator Cassidy asked you a couple of
questions about how you would reform Medicaid

03:29:23 and I didn't hear an answer. You mentioned that you
thought Medicare advantage was good. You have a
03:29:29 good plan.
03:29:32 No focus on what an incredible rip off was reported in the
Wall Street Journal by Unitedhealthcare.
03:29:40 Which was marketing Medicare Advantage and then paying
doctors and nurses where they had
03:29:46 assignments, essentially.
03:29:49 To.
03:29:52 Over. Diagnose illnesses that didn't exist, so they.
03:29:57 Made billions and billions of dollars, and I've seen
nothing coming out of the Trump administration.
03:30:03 And I've seen nothing coming out of your advocacy.
03:30:07 That is going after what is.
03:30:11 A rampant abuse by the insurance companies and
overcharging people in not doing the job. And by the
03:30:16 way, the Unitedhealthcare people, when they did that, they
overdiagnose when the person really got
03:30:20 sick, they dumped them. They dumped them.
03:30:25 Go to the nursing home on your own. That's a broken
healthcare system. We spend the most and get the
03:30:30 least, and I think there should be.
03:30:32 Collective anger about this on both sides because all of
our people are dependent on that health
03:30:37 care. System. And you're going to be working for a
president who's on a lawless. Rampage right now.
03:30:44 Okay. He has done something reckless with the pardons to
these cop beaters. I'm appalled. By that,
03:30:51 but that's just reckless. That's not illegal. He's
impounded money. So right now, the Medicaid
03:30:59 website went down.
03:31:03 He's impounded money. So the community health centers that
Senator Warner was talking about are. Up
03:31:08 in the air as to what they can do. Do you believe that a
president.
03:31:13 Can impound money that has been appropriated by Congress.
03:31:17 Senator.
03:31:19 Let me answer that question about Medicare first.
03:31:23 I have never defended that program.
03:31:26 Or. The rapagious behavior by insurance companies or the
pbMs. I understand that's. A huge problem.
03:31:34 All right. I don't have time. I got to get over to vote.
03:31:38 But you've asked me five questions. You got to give me a
chance to answer one. Of them. Please be
03:31:43 brief. Yeah.

03:31:47 I brought in. If I get confirmed, I've already appointed a
general counsel the first time. In
03:31:52 history is a former prosecutor.
03:31:55 Prosecuted the biggest Medicare fraud.
03:31:58 In the case in the state of West Virginia, I brought in a
prosecutor for that job instead. Of a
03:32:03 bureaucrat. Precisely.
03:32:06 Which has the important issue is that you raise here. The
only reason I didn't talk about these
03:32:10 before is because I wasn't asked about them. What about? I
agree with you. 100%. What about
03:32:15 impounding a president? Impounding money, among other
things, goes to. Help. And you're saying that
03:32:21 that's illegal? That's correct.
03:32:24 Well, my job is to uphold the constitution. I'm going to
take an oath to uphold. The constitution.
03:32:31 And I will administer the law and uphold the constitution.
03:32:37 Thank you.
03:32:40 Mr. Chairman.
03:32:44 I believe under what we've discussed, I control five
minutes. I'm going to take one and give one to
03:32:48 each of my four colleagues that remain. All right. And I
would just. Say this vote, they're going to
03:32:53 call it in about eight minutes. Thank you. So we have very
little time. 2 hours ago colleagues, I
03:33:00 asked Mr. Kennedy to reconcile. His many anti vaccine
statements with his handful of pro vaccine
03:33:09 statements. Instead, he gave us a word. Salad and duck.
The issue.
03:33:17 The same with true Kennedy, with respect to measles, where
you wrote a book playing down. The threat
03:33:21 of measles, even though american families are very
concerned about it. And apparently families are
03:33:27 still mourning in Samoa.
03:33:32 And my last point would be. That Mr. Kennedy said today
really wasn't about him.
03:33:38 And I just want to tell him.
03:33:41 It is all about you. Because I find your presentation to
be both. Untrustworthy and unprepared
03:33:50 because my colleagues have been seeing back and forth
between Medicare and Medicaid, and it's not
03:33:55 clear which program you're using when so I want colleagues
to know there is a lot more information
03:34:03 to learn about Mr. Kennedy before we vote. I'm going to
urge that. To my colleagues on both sides of

03:34:08 the aisle to not make decisions on the basis of this.
Session. I thank you for the additional time.

03:34:14 And I guess my next minute is Senator Whitehouse. Senator
Warren and Senator Smith. And again, 1

03:34:19 minute, please. There's been a lot of conversation. About.
Long late term abortions here, and I just

03:34:25 want to make clear. What Rhode Island Obgyn doctors
describe as what is almost always happening.

03:34:34 When a late term abortion is needed, it is a childbirth
gone wrong.

03:34:40 The family has painted the room.

03:34:43 It has bought the crib.

03:34:46 Maybe even decided on the baby's name and has gone to the
hospital to welcome the new baby into

03:34:53 their family and what is supposed to be a happy event.

03:34:57 And then things went wrong.

03:35:00 Then the alarm started pinging.

03:35:04 The lights started flashing, the medical professionals
started rushing in, and the question became.

03:35:12 Who lives and who dies.

03:35:16 The mom's life is often at risk, and she may have other
children. She needs to care for. The baby's

03:35:25 life. May be at risk.

03:35:28 And one or both.

03:35:31 May die.

03:35:32 In that environment.

03:35:35 The doctors and the family.

03:35:38 Own that decision.

03:35:41 Government has no place in that room at that point.

03:35:47 And I think we need to understand when this late term
abortion gets bandied about.

03:35:53 What you're dealing with. Is a tragedy that is happening
to a family who wanted that child and have

03:35:58 suddenly been confronted with a moment in which they have
to make what is probably going to be the

03:36:04 worst decision. Of their lives.

03:36:07 And to try to shove.

03:36:10 The state legislature into that room.

03:36:13 Is really offensive.

03:36:16 Really morally wrong, and I just want to make very clear.
What Rhode Island Obgyns tell me is the

03:36:23 situation when these procedures have to be deployed.
Senator Warren. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So,

03:36:31 Mr. Kennedy, I wanted to ask about.

03:36:34 Your role in the 2019 measles outbreak in Samoa.

03:36:38 In July 2018, two children died immediately after receiving a measles vaccine that nurses had

03:36:44 mistakenly mixed with a muscle relaxant. The nurses get charged with manslaughter.

03:36:51 But vaccination rates go down. I asked you about this in my office. You told me. Flatly that your

03:36:57 visit to Samoa had nothing to do. With vaccinations. We now know that's not true. I have the

03:37:03 documentation you met with the prime minister. You talked about vaccinations. You met with an anti

03:37:09 vaccine. Influencer who described the meeting as, quote, profoundly monumental for this movement. So

03:37:16 what happens? Vaccinations go down, there's a measles outbreak. And children start dying, but. You

03:37:25 double down. You didn't give up. Just four days after the prime minister declared a state of

03:37:30 emergency. 16 people already dead. You sent a letter to him promoting the idea that the children had

03:37:37 died, not from measles, but from, quote.

03:37:41 Defective vaccine. You launched the idea that a measles vaccine caused these deaths.

03:37:48 You are a very influential man. In fact, you are called the leader of the disinformation. Dozen.

03:37:56 UNICEF and WHL, the World Health Organization, investigated this. They say the claims are false. It

03:38:04 is not biologically possible, what you claimed. And yet, ultimately, more than 70 people died.

03:38:13 Because they didn't get vaccines. So my question.

03:38:17 Is. Do you accept? Even a scintillic, even a sliver?

03:38:22 Of responsibility.

03:38:24 For the drop in vaccinations and the subsequent deaths of more than 70 people. Anything you do

03:38:31 differently.

03:38:33 No. Absolutely not.

03:38:35 There were two incidents which children died.

03:38:39 In 2015 and in 28, 2015. It was from the measles vaccine, as with New Zealand. General Hospital.

03:38:48 Government of Samoa banned the measles vaccine after the 2018. I arrived in July of the next year.

03:38:59 After the band. Had been in place for a year.

03:39:03 Understanding that you wanted to hold us to a minute, and I don't get to present. All the facts and

03:39:09 documentation I've got. How about if we just decide to make entries? For the record on exactly what

03:39:15 the record shows about Mr. Kennedy's participation. And I think he's answered the yes or no

03:39:20 question, he takes no response. Senator Warren. We will do that. And Mr. Kennedy, and to all the

03:39:26 senators, every senator knows that. Following this hearing, they will be able to ask you questions

03:39:30 off the record, and you will be able to put answers back onto the record, so please give that

03:39:35 answer. I apologize that we're shutting you off for giving a full response right now.

03:39:41 Senator Smith, and we are way over time. Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Kennedy, you have said that

03:39:46 you want to give infectious diseases a break for about eight years. You spoke about this with

03:39:50 Senator Kentwell, my question to you has to do with av and flu. Over 100 million birds. Called the

03:39:55 disease has spread to dairy cows, and there are now 67 confirmed human cases and one death. So, Mr.

03:40:01 Kennedy, do you intend to give research on bird flu a break?

03:40:06 No, I intended about the appropriate resources to preventing pandemics. That's a central part. Of my

03:40:10 job. What do you think is causing the avian influenza? This will go to my. Office, I think. H five n

03:40:16 15. So that's good to hear because in a recent book, I will submit this for the record because we

03:40:21 don't have that much time. Mr. Kennedy has questioned the scientific basis for germs causing disease

03:40:27 and the power of vaccines and antibiotics.

03:40:31 I've never questioned that, senator. Well, I will submit that for the record. Thank you, senator.

03:40:35 Warnick. 1 minute.

03:40:37 I like the way you said that to the Baptist preacher. Thank you so much, Mr. Kennedy, based on our

03:40:42 conversations. It's my understanding that you support work requirements and Medicaid.

03:40:48 In 2020, President Trump approved a proposal from Georgia state leaders requiring Georgians to jump

03:40:53 through a number of honourous bureaucratic hoops and fill out even more paperwork to verify work and

03:40:59 get access to healthcare assets. As someone who represents a state that has not expanded Medicaid,

03:41:06 federal government because of this. Waiver spent 70 million.

03:41:10 Dollars on Georgia's Medicaid waiver.

03:41:14 82% of that went to administrative costs. The point that I'm making is that the folks that they're
03:41:19 insisting need to work.
03:41:22 90% of those folks are working.
03:41:24 They are caregivers or they have a disability. Let me give you one example. A woman I think of all
03:41:30 the time. Her name is Heather. She's a traveling nurse. From Dalton, Georgia, who falls into the
03:41:35 Medicaid coverage gap. Heather experienced a series of small strokes, leaving her unable to work
03:41:43 full time. She's dedicated her life to caring for patients. But now she can't afford her own medical
03:41:48 care out of. Pocket costs because she doesn't make enough to qualify for tax credits to buy private
03:41:55 insurance.
03:41:57 What does Heather need? Does she need work requirements, or does she need access to health care? So
03:42:02 she can finally get healthy and get back to work. The individual that you described would need
03:42:10 health care and not a work requirement. Thank you. Thank you, thank you. Thank you. And we are done
03:42:17 with the questioning. Now, Mr. Kennedy, I apologize to you to the audience and to all of my
03:42:23 colleagues to have to rush it here at the end. But we have a vote on the senate floor that they're
03:42:27 going to close in about three minutes.
03:42:30 I want to thank you for appearing before this committee. You have been accessible to the members
03:42:35 and. Staff on both sides of the aisle of the finance committee throughout a rigorous process. And I
03:42:40 want the whole world to know that you spent hours. In meetings, answering questions outside of this
03:42:47 hearing, and providing documents and responses on issue after issue after issue. You've gone through
03:42:53 the most thorough vetting process that any committee in this Congress puts anybody through. And I
03:43:00 think that you have come through well and deserve to be confirmed.
03:43:06 I would like to remind. My colleagues that the deadline for submitting any questions for the record
03:43:12 is 05:00 p.m. today.
03:43:16 05:00 p.m. today and Mr. Kennedy, we ask that you respond to those questions as quickly as you
03:43:21 possibly can.
03:43:23 With that. I'm going to leave you in this room.

03:43:26 And run over to vote. This hearing will be adjourned. I still encourage the audience to be polite

03:43:32 and respectful no matter what side of the issues you may be on. And Mr. Kennedy. I look forward to

03:43:38 working with you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for adjourn.

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03:44:12 consider making a contribution today to keep our programming going strong. Thank you.