



Senate Reviews RFK Jr.'s Nomination for Health Secretary Amid Tensions

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Senate recently held two nomination hearings for Robert F. Kennedy Jr., President Trump's nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services. The hearings were marked by rigorous questioning from both sides of the political spectrum.

The first hearing, conducted by the Senate Committee on Finance, began with Chair Mike Crapo (R-ID) expressing gratitude for Kennedy's engagement with Congress and his focus on preventing chronic diseases. However, Senator Ron Wyden, the committee's ranking member, expressed skepticism about Kennedy's suitability for the role. Republican senators commended Kennedy's commitment to addressing chronic disease, while Democrats questioned his views on vaccination and abortion.

Senator Ben Ray Luján raised concerns about potential Medicaid cuts and the impact on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs, particularly regarding Native American participation in clinical trials. Kennedy assured the committee of his commitment to these issues, pledging to appoint a Native American to his central office and highlighting his extensive work on Native issues.

The second hearing, held by the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, saw Chairman Bill Cassidy (R-LA) express appreciation for Kennedy's willingness to serve, while voicing concerns over his previous anti-vaccination stance. Cassidy asked if Kennedy's views could be influenced by data. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), the committee's ranking member, acknowledged Kennedy's slogan, "Make America Healthy Again," but criticized the high costs of healthcare.

The hearings reflected a divide, with Republicans showing support and Democrats remaining cautious. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) confirmed Kennedy's commitment to increasing the budget for Indian Country, which he affirmed, citing his dedication to Native issues and his role with Indian Country Today.

As of now, no confirmation vote has taken place, leaving Kennedy's nomination pending. The Navajo Nation Washington Office is monitoring the situation closely, particularly Kennedy's promise to appoint a Native American leader to his team.