



Health Policy Briefing

August 24, 2026

White House Aide Heidi Overton Nominated to Lead FDA

President Donald Trump plans to nominate White House policy aide Heidi Overton, MD, PhD to lead the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Overton is a medical doctor who is board-certified in public health and general preventive medicine; she also has a doctorate in clinical investigation. She is currently a deputy assistant to the President for domestic policy, working on health issues. Overton previously led the Center for a Healthy America at the America First Policy Institute, and worked as a White House fellow during the President's first term in office.

Overton's involvement in the President's recent executive order to reduce the number of vaccines recommended for children has been criticized by Sen. Bill Cassidy, MD (R-La.). "Dr. Overton's active role in last week's nonsensical vaccine executive order calls into question her commitment to standing up for sound science and protecting children's health. That alone is almost disqualifying," Cassidy said in a social media post last week. Cassidy chairs the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, which is responsible for considering FDA commissioner nominations. Many Democrats have already pledged to oppose her nomination as well. The FDA has been without a permanent leader since Commissioner Marty Makary, MD resigned in May.

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Comer Presses Becerra on COVID-19 Investigation

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chair James Comer (R-Ky.) is [requesting](#) information from former U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary (HHS) Xavier Becerra as a part of a prior investigation into the nation's COVID-19 response. The request relates to the diary and phone records of Anthony Fauci, MD, which Comer alleges were withheld by HHS last congress. "The Committee is concerned that you either intentionally withheld this information, or that you failed to conduct an adequate search of the Department's systems as requested in the November 2, 2023, letter," Comer says. He also asks whether any Biden administration officials advised or pressured Becerra to omit those documents from the agency's response to the committee at the time. A response from Becerra is requested by September 2.

Florida Republican Cory Mills Loses Primary Election

Rep. Cory Mills (R-Fla.) lost his primary race to represent Florida's 7th congressional district last week. He was defeated by former local television news reporter Ryan Elijah. Mills has served in Congress since 2023 and currently sits on the Foreign Affairs and Armed Services committees. He has been investigated by the House Ethics Committee over the last year due to allegations of fraud as well as misconduct toward women.

HHS Publishes RFI on Vaccine Recommendation Categories

HHS has released a [request for information](#) seeking input on federal vaccine recommendation categories and the role of shared clinical decision making. The RFI questions whether the three vaccine categories currently used in federal vaccine recommendations – routine, risk-based, and shared clinical decision making – are adequate, clear, and well understood, and asks whether additional or different categories should be adopted. The Department also requests comment on "the considerations that should be relied upon in setting vaccine recommendations, including the availability and strength of available scientific evidence, the appropriate approach when randomized controlled trial evidence is limited or absent, a presumption in favor of individual autonomy and religious freedom, the downstream legal and programmatic consequences of category assignment, and the communication practices necessary to earn and maintain public trust." Comments are due by September 20.

Recently Introduced Health Legislation

H.R.10116 — To amend title 23, United States Code, to establish an EMS and First Responder Wellness Grant Program, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Salinas, Andrea [Rep.-D-OR-6]; Committees: House - Transportation and Infrastructure

H.R.10127 — To prohibit the use of Federal funds to conduct, support, or fund research that studies the effects of gender-related medical treatment, and for other purposes; Sponsor: Mace, Nancy [Rep.-R-SC-1]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce

H.R.10133 — To amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure cost sharing for a drug does not exceed the nationwide average of consumer purchase prices for such drug; Sponsor: Scholten, Hillary J. [Rep.-D-MI-3]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce; Ways and Means; Education and Workforce

H.R.10134 — To establish an eligibility exception for the drug discount program due to cuts to the Medicaid program; Sponsor: Scholten, Hillary J. [Rep.-D-MI-3]; Committees: House - Energy and Commerce