

<https://www.wsj.com/health/healthcare/trump-planning-to-fire-fda-commissioner-marty-makary-34c072e2>

EXCLUSIVE HEALTHCARE

Trump Is Planning to Fire FDA Commissioner Marty Makary

The doctor, a MAHA advocate, has had a tumultuous tenure

By Liz Essley Whyte [Follow](#)

May 8, 2026 1:09 pm ET



FDA Commissioner Marty Makary at the White House in December. ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY IMAGES

WASHINGTON—President Trump has signed off on a plan to fire Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Marty Makary, according to people familiar with the matter, following a tumultuous period for the regulator that included clashes over vaping, abortion and drug policy.

Makary, a former Johns Hopkins surgeon who became a frequent Make America Healthy Again surrogate on television news programs, is seen by other top administration leaders as struggling to manage his agency, sparring frequently with health department officials and at times the White House. His tenure has also been dogged by the aftereffects of layoffs led by

the Department of Government Efficiency and rapid turnover in the FDA's leadership ranks.

He would become the latest top lieutenant fired under Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. since the ouster of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Susan Monarez last summer and the February removal of HHS Deputy Secretary Jim O'Neill.

Trump's plan isn't yet final and could change.

"President Trump has assembled the most experienced and talented administration in history, an administration that continues to focus on delivering more historic victories for the American people," said White House spokesman Kush Desai.

Makary didn't respond to a request for comment.

Top administration officials have become increasingly convinced Makary has to go because, in addition to months of turmoil, complaints from some in the pharmaceutical industry have continued to mount, people familiar with the matter said. Kennedy last year had considered installing someone else to run the FDA while Makary remained a figurehead.

Trump recently became frustrated with Makary for not moving fast enough to approve flavored vapes and other nicotine products. Makary in February refused to authorize blueberry and mango vape flavors from Los Angeles manufacturer Glas, worried that fruit flavors would encourage youth vaping. After the pressure from Trump, he reversed course and authorized the flavors.

Makary has also run into criticism from biotech companies with rare-disease drugs, as well as patients and their advocates.

“I supported his nomination because he spoke truth during COVID,” rare-disease advocate and former U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum said of Makary on social media earlier this month. “He immediately fired the best leaders at the FDA, replaced them with anti-Trump leftists who hollowed out FDA, harmed patients, stifled innovation & drove bio-tech to China then lied about it.”

Marjorie Dannenfelser, the influential president of antiabortion group Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America, recently renewed her call for Makary to be fired. The Wall Street Journal reported that Makary said he could have stalled approval of a generic form of the abortion pill, but didn’t.

Makary rose in conservative circles as a measured critic of pandemic-era health efforts and the failings of the traditional medical establishment. In September 2024 he joined Kennedy and other health influencers, including former surgeon-general nominee Dr. Casey Means, for a Senate panel on nutrition, marking the start of Makary’s public alliance with the MAHA movement.

Trump tapped Makary for the FDA post in November 2024, as Kennedy and other health department leaders bonded in meetings at Dr. Mehmet Oz’s oceanfront Florida mansion. Kennedy described Makary, along with Oz and National Institutes of Health Director Jay Bhattacharya, as “friends” who stayed in each other’s homes and vacationed together, in a Fox News interview last year.

But Makary has battled with others in the health department on a range of policy issues, people familiar with the matter said. And he has increasingly relied on a small inner circle of advisers as he searched for “wins” he could tout to the White House and the press, some of the people familiar with the matter said.

Liz Essley Whyte is a health policy reporter in The Wall Street Journal's D.C. bureau, with a special focus on the federal health agencies. Before joining the Journal in 2022, she was an investigative reporter at the Center for Public Integrity, a nonprofit newsroom, where for several years she covered...



Further Reading

Trump Pressures FDA Commissioner to Approve Flavored Vapes

The Antiabortion Movement Is Turning on Trump

OPINION **President Trump's Marty Makary Problem**

Videos

