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On Wednesday, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is set to appear before the Senate Finance Committee for the first of two confirmation hearings as President Donald Trump's

If confirmed, Kennedy would have sweeping control over a suite of 18 agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

This is the most important hearing of all of Trump's Cabinet picks," said Lawrence Gostin, director of the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University. "The HHS secretary has enormous power over domestic health care, global health and directly oversees tens of thousands of scientists, doctors and nurses."a statement to NBC News, Merck said in part, "The plaintiff's allegations have no merit, and we remain committed to vigorously defending against these claims."

A spokesperson for Kennedy declined to comment.

Wednesday's hearing will be followed Thursday with a hearing in front of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

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