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PRESS RELEASE

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Attorney General Brown Sues to Stop Dismantling of Health and Human Services Department

BALTIMORE, MD (May 5, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined 18 attorneys general in filing a [lawsuit](#) against Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other Trump administration officials to stop the dismantling of HHS. Since taking office, Secretary Kennedy and the Trump administration have fired thousands of federal health workers, shuttered vital programs, and abandoned states to face mounting health crises without federal support. The attorneys general argue that Secretary Kennedy and the Trump administration have robbed HHS of the resources that Congress appropriated and that are necessary to effectively serve the American people. The attorneys general will be asking the court to halt further dismantling and restore key program operations.

“By firing health workers, shutting down disease surveillance labs, and slashing critical programs, the Trump Administration is putting every Marylander at risk,” **said Attorney General Brown.** “We filed this lawsuit because these cuts threaten services that save lives—like maternal health care, mental health and addiction treatment, and cancer screenings. Our Office will do everything in our power to protect the millions of Marylanders who depend on these vital programs.”

On March 27, Secretary Kennedy revealed a dramatic restructuring of HHS as part of the president’s “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE) initiative. The secretary announced that the department’s 28 agencies would be collapsed into 15, with many surviving offices shuffled or split apart. He also announced mass firings, slashing the department’s headcount from 85,000 to 65,000. On April 1, 10,000 HHS employees across the nation were terminated. Half of HHS’s regional offices were closed, including offices in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, New York City, San Francisco and Seattle.

In the lawsuit, the attorneys general argue that these changes unlawfully dismantle a federal agency and have wreaked havoc across the entire health system. Miners suffering from black lung disease have been left unprotected as congressionally mandated surveillance programs were abruptly shut down. Workers across the country can no longer reliably access N95 masks following the closure of the nation’s only federal mask approval laboratory. Key Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) infectious disease laboratories have also been shuttered,

including those responsible for testing and tracking measles, effectively halting the federal government's ability to monitor the disease nationwide.

Hundreds of employees working on mental health and addiction treatment, including half of the entire workforce at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), have been fired, and all SAMHSA regional offices are now closed. The World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP), which provides life-saving care to more than 137,000 9/11 first responders and survivors, stand to lose the doctors needed to certify new cancer diagnoses, leaving American heroes without access to the health care they deserve. Pregnant women and newborns are now at risk after the firing of the entire CDC maternal health team and Head Start centers could face closures after many regional employees at the Office of Head Start were let go.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition argue that these sweeping actions are in clear violation of hundreds of federal statutes and regulations, and that the Trump administration does not have the authority to make these reckless changes. The attorneys general allege that by taking these actions without congressional approval, the administration is disregarding the constitutional separation of powers and undermining the laws and budgets enacted by Congress to protect public health. Since its founding, HHS has worked to protect and advance the health and well-being of all Americans. The attorneys general assert that now, under this recent restructuring, that mission is in jeopardy.

The coalition is urging the court to halt the mass firings, reverse the illegal reorganization, and restore the critical health services that millions of Americans depend on.

On April 1, Attorney General Brown joined a coalition of 23 attorneys general in [filing a lawsuit](#) against Secretary Kennedy and the Trump administration for abruptly and unlawfully slashing billions of dollars in vital state health funding. On April 4, a federal judge issued a temporary restraining order against the administration, temporarily reinstating the funding.

In filing this lawsuit, Attorney General Brown joins the attorneys general of Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawai'i, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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