

The Boston Globe

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2025



KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY IMAGES

Dr. Susan Monarez testified that Robert F. Kennedy Jr. is ignoring the scientific basis behind vaccine recommendations.

AS VACCINE BATTLE RAGES, MASS. MAKES GUARANTEE

Kennedy struggles to praise Trump's 'Operation Warp Speed' as he dismantles it

By Tal Kopan
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — Less than two months ago, Susan Monarez sat before a Senate committee and convinced senators to confirm her to lead the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

On Wednesday, she returned to that same committee to give her version of the events that led to her removal by Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. after just 29 days, reportedly for refusing to rubber-stamp upcoming recommendations from a vaccine panel stocked with his allies. She was joined by former chief medical officer Debra Houry, who resigned in protest when Monarez was fired.

The hearing was a major rebuke of Kennedy and came as some Republicans have been increasingly critical of his actions, including firing Monarez, limiting access to the COVID vaccine, potentially changing the childhood inoculation schedule, and cutting research on vaccines.

Lawmakers on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions panel also revived a bipartisan line of questioning that highlighted a wedge between President Trump and Kennedy during the HHS secretary's recent appearance before

WARP SPEED, Page A7

Healey vows children will get necessary shots no matter what panel says

By Jason Laughlin and Sarah Rahal
GLOBE STAFF

With a key federal vaccine committee considering changing or restricting access to some childhood vaccinations this week, Governor Maura Healey on Wednesday pledged that Massachusetts families would still be able to get those shots for their kids.

"If you want a vaccine, you'll be able to get a vaccine," Healey said at a press conference at the State House.

She spoke one day before a federal vaccine advisory panel with new members appointed by US Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr. begins a two-day deliberation on the annual shots for hepatitis B and measles, mumps, rubella, and chicken pox, or varicella, all of which are administered to young children, as well as recommendations for COVID vaccines.

The Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices, with backing from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has for decades driven immunization policies nationwide, but under Kennedy has since been remade to reflect his antivaccine ideology.

Earlier Wednesday, the recently fired director

VACCINE, Page A7

Fed cuts rates for first time this year

Labor market now bigger concern than inflation

By Colby Smith
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve on Wednesday lowered interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point as officials signaled that two more cuts could follow this year in light of rising risks confronting the labor market.

The decision to lower borrowing costs for the first time since December shifts interest rates to a range of 4 percent to 4.25 percent. The decision was not unanimously supported, the second straight meeting that featured at least one dissent from a member of the Board of Governors.

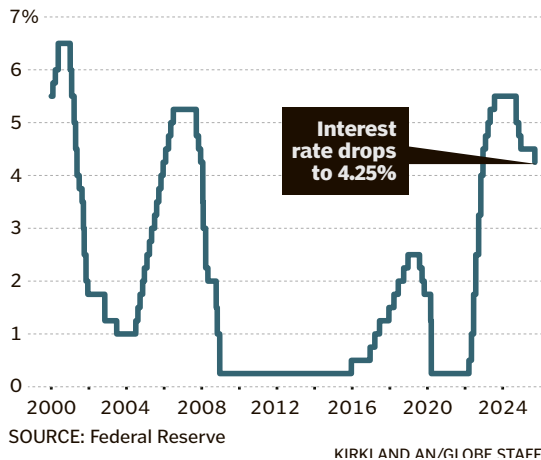
Stephen Miran, President Trump's pick to join the Fed who was sworn in just minutes before the start of the central bank's two-day meeting Tuesday, voted in favor of a half-point reduction.

The decision to cut rates is a turning point for the central bank, whose officials have been locked in an intense debate about the right time to provide some relief to borrowers when its goals of low, stable inflation and a healthy labor market are in tension. It also comes as Trump has intensified his pressure campaign against the institution, which has included an attempt to oust a sitting governor.

On Wednesday, Fed Chair Jerome Powell de-

FED, Page A6

Target rate since 2000



Somerville will have new mayor but problems will be waiting

By Spencer Buell
GLOBE STAFF

SOMERVILLE — Here, in a progressive enclave beset by soaring housing costs and threats from the federal government, much is at stake: new developments are reshaping tightly packed streets, a possible budget crunch looms, and its left wing politics and out-there quirk make it a ripe target for the Trump administration.

Now the city will face this time of extraordinary tumult under new leadership, after Mayor Katjana Ballantyne finished a distant third in a three-way preliminary election on Tuesday.

It was a rare rebuke from voters of a mayor they felt was not meeting the moment. They will now choose between City Councilors Jake Wilson and Willie Burnley Jr. to navigate some of this era's most galvanizing debates.

In a state that rarely kicks out incumbents, Tuesday was a drubbing. The result also stood in sharp contrast to neighboring Boston, where the incumbent mayor, Michelle Wu, so soundly outpolled the runner-up, Josh Kraft, last week that he swiftly dropped out of the race altogether.

In an interview Wednesday, Ballantyne said she stood by what she had accomplished in office, and her efforts to add new affordable housing, update tech zoning, and bolster the city's creditworthiness — assets she had promoted on

SOMERVILLE, Page A10

A chance to go deeper on brain and body link

Harvard Medical School gets \$30m gift for new center

By Kay Lazar
GLOBE STAFF

Is sleep loss contributing to the increasing rate of colon cancer in young people? Can nerve cells in our skin be manipulated to ease hypersensitivity to touch for patients with autism? And can the breathtakingly complex layer of protective cells around our brain be unlocked so cancer drugs might be more effectively delivered to tumors?

Amid a chaotic and uncertain time for federal funding of scientific research, a \$30 million gift to Harvard Medical School for a new Brain-Body Center will fuel cutting-edge research to help answer these and other pressing health questions, scientists say.

The gift, from philanthropist K. Lisa Yang, will bring together scientists who study the gut, sleep, immunity, pain, and more — and link their work with a sister center at MIT — to create a more complete map of how the brain keeps tabs on the body, and how things can go awry when it doesn't, Harvard said.

"It's really cool, because you can do some high risk, high reward types of study" with this new center, said Chenghua Gu, a Harvard neurobiology professor whose research will be supported in the new initiative. "And you'll have a network you can collaborate with."

Gu studies the blood-brain barrier, a layer of tightly woven cells that blocks bacteria and other harmful substances from reaching the brain and spinal cord but allows in essential nutrients. This barrier has proved a challenge

CENTER, Page A10



BEN PENNINGTON FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

Dragana Rogulja, associate professor of neurobiology, studies sleep and what happens in the body without it.

A former City Hall employee is suing Mayor Michelle Wu and her administration, saying the city fired the worker to protect a Wu official. **B1.**

Beacon Hill is moving to push up the 2026 primary from Sept. 15 to Sept. 1. **B1.**

President Trump received a pomp-filled royal

welcome to Britain, feted by King Charles III at Windsor Castle during a two-day trip. **A3.**

Ben & Jerry's cofounder Jerry Greenfield is leaving after 47 years, saying the parent company is keeping him from speaking on social issues. **D1.**

The Red Sox won a big one, 5-4 over the A's. **C1.**



Endless summer

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Weather and Comics, D5-6.

VOL. 308, NO. 80

Suggested retail price
\$4.00



37413