

Episode 57DHT May 22 2025 Human Health threatened by Trump defunding science and medicine

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1A Human Health threatened by Trump defunding science and medicine Funding Cuts Are a Gut Punch for STEM Education Researchers More than half of the National Science Foundation grants terminated since April fund programs that would help students train in science engineering and math **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times May 22 2025 Change continues to

ripple through the National Science Foundation as it tries to comply with the policies and priorities of the Trump administration. But the branch of the agency that funds STEM education research is taking a disproportionate hit. STEM education research focuses on improving how students from preschool to university are trained in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. That encompasses everything from adopting better curriculums and teaching methods to changing the way schools and districts are run. The defunding comes amid broader shifts in education. That includes mass layoffs and hundreds of millions of dollars in cuts to various components of the Department of Education which Trump has tried to eliminate altogether. The broader attack here is on evidence, said an education researcher at the University of Colorado Boulder. One potential outcome of defunding a large portion of STEM education research is that the work may become more concentrated at larger universities that are able to provide alternative sources of funding. That is unfortunate as STEM education is often tailored to local and state level priorities. Researchers funded outside of the foundation, STEM education directorate in physics, engineering, geoscience, and more, face less extreme cuts. But they too are concerned about the financial support and educational preparation of students in STEM, many of whom would lead the next generation of scientific discoveries. STEM and STEM education research need to grow hand in hand and if we stop funding education research, they will not.

1B1 Kennedy Junior delaying COVID 19 vaccines and deliberately focusing on advising on irrelevant side issues. Is There Really a Chronic Disease Epidemic? It is Complicated. Robert F Kennedy Junior wants to return the nation to a time when he believes Americans were healthier. Not so fast, many researchers say. Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates, a 501c3 nonprofit organization. The New York Times, May 22, 2025. Robert F Kennedy Junior, the health secretary, often says that when his uncle was president in the early 1960s, Americans were much healthier than they are now. People were thinner and had lower rates of chronic disease, he recalls. Fewer children had autism, allergies, or autoimmune diseases. On Thursday, the Trump administration plans to release a report with a particular emphasis on the health of children, premised on the idea that we have fallen far since this golden era. But were Americans really healthier back then? The U.S. population was much younger in the 1960s, at the tail end of the Baby Boom, which complicates comparisons. Only 12.4 percent of the population was 65 or older in 1963, compared with 17.7 percent now. Rates of chronic diseases generally increase with age. But Americans must be doing something right. Life expectancy has increased. A child born today can expect to live almost a decade longer than a child born in 1960. That is partly because advances in medical care mean that conditions that were deadly decades ago can be kept in check for longer now. If R.F.K. Junior makes the statement that more people are dying of chronic diseases now than in the Jack Kennedy era, that is undoubtedly true. We have got twice as many people, and a much larger chunk are old folks who have much higher chronic disease rates. Does that mean we are doing worse than back then? Absolutely not. Americans have put on the pounds over the decades, as Kennedy often notes. Diabetes and obesity are on the rise, even among adolescents. On the other hand, the country has cut back dramatically on smoking, a habit that once contributed to huge numbers of deaths in the United States. Only 12 percent of adults smoke now, down from 42 percent in 1965. The landmark report of the Surgeon General describing the harms of smoking was issued in 1964, when more than half of all adult men smoked. Partly as a result, the two leading causes of death, heart disease and cancer, have fallen. Death rates attributable to heart disease dropped 71 percent from 1960 to 2019, and rates of death because of stroke have also declined. Kennedy

has suggested that cancer is on the rise and the Trump executive order establishing the Make America Healthy Again Commission which put together the new report contained some erroneous cancer statistics. In fact rates have been gradually declining over the past 30 years according to the National Cancer Institute.

More on Covid 19 Efforts to Thwart N A Therapies The therapies a key to Covid vaccines hold great potential in treating several diseases but some lawmakers want to ban them and the government is cutting funding. We asked experts about how the technology works its safety and its potential in medicine.

Vaccine Approvals Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Junior announced plans to require all new vaccines to be tested against placebos and to develop new vaccines without using N A technology moves that raise questions about whether Covid boosters will be available in the fall.

Gut Issues Why does Covid cause diarrhea constipation pain and bloating? Here are some suggestions for what to do about these conditions.

Heart Problems One recent study found that a Covid infection doubled the risk of a major cardiovascular event for up to three years afterward. People who had severe infections were especially vulnerable.

Paxlovid and Long Covid A new report suggested the drug might improve symptoms for some patients but results were mixed. The order also asserted that the United States had the highest incidence rate of cancer among 204 countries. That is incorrect. The nation does not even rank in the top five unless non melanoma skin cancers are included in which case the United States ranks fourth after Australia New Zealand and Denmark. These skin cancers are very common and not usually life threatening. But it is true that rates of certain malignancies particularly breast cancer and colorectal cancer are rising among younger Americans. Rates of some childhood cancers have also increased. And yes Americans could be faring better. Average life expectancy is lower than in the European Union. After a pandemic dip life expectancy inched back up to 78 point 4 years in 2023 a few years behind the average 81 point 4 years in the European Union E U. Many of those countries offer national health insurance that covers citizens from cradle to grave. Universal access to health care may account for some of the difference. Kennedy is correct that the average American has gained weight. When you look at chronic disease you are going to see that the diseases largely driven by cigarette smoking have declined since J F K was president. More jobs involved physical activity in 1960. According to the American Heart Association physically active jobs account for just 20 percent of the work force now down from half in 1960. Americans also eat more meals in restaurants where diners often do not always know what went into the entree. According to the Agriculture Department the percent of calories consumed outside the home rose almost 74 percent between the late 1970s and 2017 2018. Six in 10 Americans have at least one chronic disease and four in 10 have two chronic conditions or more a higher rate than in the European Union Canada or Australia. We end up spending more on health care as a share of the economy as a result. We have among the highest number of hospitalizations from preventable causes and a high rate of preventable or avoidable deaths many from chronic diseases. Kennedy has pointed to unhealthy diets pesticides food coloring and seed oils as the culprits. Recently he has also begun targeting sugar sweetened beverages which are closely linked to the development of Type 2 diabetes even apart from weight gain. Yet the apparent increase in chronic disease rates is also driven to some extent by earlier detection. In the past people often did not even know they had chronic conditions. We are diagnosing a lot more things and we are diagnosing them a lot earlier. Patients have their blood pressure taken at almost any encounter with a health provider for example. And the threshold for treatment has been lowered over the years. A 1965 report recommended referrals for patients only when their systolic pressure exceeded 160. By 2017 treatment was recommended at a systolic pressure of 130.

and diastolic pressure of 80 That does not mean that high blood pressure is more common only that doctors have changed the definition of it Obesity was not even defined as a disease until 2013 A study that compared patients in the United States with those in England and Wales reported that Americans were less likely to die of cancer and slightly less likely to die of Covid in 2023 But the cardiovascular death rate was 38 percent higher in the United States The overdose death rate was more than three times higher deaths from car accidents were six times higher and the firearm death rate was 133 times higher Many of these trends were documented by federal scientists who were dismissed in recent mass layoffs The chronic disease prevention center at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was eliminated Employees studying how to prevent gun violence were fired The C D C Office on Smoking and Health was shuttered

2A South Africa farmer murder toll problem has a solution suggested by South African President to Trump **RAWSEP View** Ramaphosa suggested that Trump fund Drones to deter criminal activity in South Africa **From the article headline** Trump Claimed a Social Media Video Showed Burial Sites of White Farmers It Did not During a meeting with the president of South Africa Trump played the video as evidence of racial persecution Trump misrepresented the contents of the video **RAWSEP interjects** Trump in other words lied about the contents of the video **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times May 21 2025 In a White House meeting on Wednesday Trump showed President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa a social media video of a rural road lined with white crosses and hundreds of vehicles Trump told Ramaphosa that the footage showed burial sites of over 1000 white farmers in South Africa The footage instead showed a memorial procession on September 5 2020 near Newcastle South Africa The event according to a local news website was for a white farming couple in the area who the police said had been murdered in late August of that year The crosses were planted in the days ahead of the event and were later removed The misrepresentation of the footage took place during a stunning meeting in which Trump made false claims about a genocide against white farmers Contrary to the Trump statements the crosses are not gravesites for farmers and were not permanently placed along the road Footage posted to social media before the remembrance event in early September 2020 shows people setting up the white crosses and Google Street View images from 2023 indicate they have since been taken down South Africa has an exceptionally high murder rate but police statistics do not show that white South Africans or farmers are more vulnerable to violent crime than other people A White House official did not comment on why Trump had characterized the video as showing burial sites Elon Musk who is originally from South Africa and is one of the Trump advisers had posted the video on the social media site X at least twice before the meeting today 2B In the Wednesday meeting when Ramaphosa asked where the video was from Trump said I mean it is in South Africa **South Africa Collides Head On With The Trump Claims of White Victimhood** In a bruising Oval Office meeting The plan of visitors to keep Trump from focusing on false accusations of white genocide backfired **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times May 21 2025 People who do get killed unfortunately through criminal activity are not only white people The majority of them are Black people who get killed through criminal activity 2C Some South Africans defended President the Cyril Ramaphosa handling of the Trump false claims during a confrontational meeting in the Oval Office while others expressed dismay The New York Times May 22 2025 For President Cyril Ramaphosa of South

Africa the meeting in the Oval Office was meant to be a chance to hit the reset button. He did everything to get the mood right. He got Trump to giggle with a joke about golf. He offered him a book. And he kept the compliments flowing thanking Trump for providing South Africa with respirators during the Covid 19 pandemic. It really touched my heart Ramaphosa said. In the build up to the Ramaphosa meeting in the White House on Wednesday South African officials stressed that they would not focus on the Trump recent claims of white genocide which are widely acknowledged as false. Instead they would talk about tariffs, the valuable minerals of South Africa and strengthening business ties between the two countries. But Ramaphosa walked away from the meeting still carrying uncertainty over the future of the crucial relationship of South Africa with the United States. His effort to avoid the discussion of the so called genocide and the recent arrival of 59 white South Africans labeled refugees by the Trump administration appeared to backfire. Ramaphosa sought to get reassurances from the White House that his country could continue to rely on the United States its second largest trading partner as a market for South African goods and as a source of investment in the economy of South Africa. Ramaphosa had brought to the meeting to help dispel myths about white persecution to reveal that his family used an electric fence for protection and that his mother had been the victim of an attack. I do believe that there is doubt and disbelief in his head about all of this Ramaphosa said. Ramaphosa said that his delegation had presented a framework of a trade deal to U S officials. The two sides held a working lunch following the Oval Office gathering and Ramaphosa briefed journalists in a hotel ballroom afterward. He was greeted by applause from members of his delegation. Ramaphosa is known as a calm tactician and was smiling. Ramaphosa said arguing that once the cameras were off the conversation was no longer contentious. South Africa presented a framework for a trade deal Ramaphosa said and the two sides agreed to hold further discussions to iron out the specifics of an agreement. He said that Trump indicated that he would attend the Group of 20 summit in Johannesburg in November despite suggestions by his administration that the United States might skip it. Senator Chris Van Hollen a Democrat from Maryland said that if South Africa the largest economy on the African continent continued to feel isolated by the United States it could damage American interests as well. I see this as Trump retreating from the Global South and ceding leadership to China and other adversaries Van Hollen said.

3 Trump Budget Bill passed 215 to 214. House Passes The Trump Domestic Policy Bill Overcoming Last Minute Resistance. The victory for Republicans came after Speaker Mike Johnson made concessions to holdouts in several factions and Trump pressured the party to fall in line. Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization. The New York Times May 22 2025. The House early Thursday narrowly passed a wide ranging bill to deliver the Trump domestic agenda after Speaker Mike Johnson put down several mini rebellions in Republican ranks to muscle the legislation to its first major victory over unified Democratic opposition. The early morning vote was 215 to 214 mostly along party lines. The legislation would slash taxes steer more money to the military and border security and pay for some of this with cuts to Medicaid food assistance education and clean energy programs adding significantly to federal deficits and to the ranks of the uninsured. Its passage was a crucial victory for what Trump and Republicans are calling the big beautiful bill and the first step in their plan to push it through Congress over unified Democratic opposition using special rules that shield it from a Senate filibuster. That process has been fraught with problems given the G O P tiny margins of control in both chambers and rampant divisions within its ranks. And the measure is likely to face substantial obstacles in the Senate where Republicans have far different

ideas about what should be in the legislation and a more complicated set of rules for considering such bills. Johnson had haggled with Republicans from across the ideological spectrum who were demanding changes to the bill and refusing to lend their support. Just hours before the vote he unveiled a series of concessions including speeding up new work requirements for Medicaid, increasing the state and local tax deduction and expanding a rollback of clean energy tax credits created by the Biden administration in the Inflation Reduction Act. Then he sought to call the bluff of the holdouts, setting a vote on the legislation for the early morning and effectively daring recalcitrant Republicans to oppose it. On the House floor, forced to go on the record on the Trump legislative agenda, their opposition collapsed. In the end, just two Republicans, Representatives Warren Davidson of Ohio and Thomas Massie of Kentucky, both anti-deficit conservatives, voted against it. Representative Andy Harris of Maryland, the chairman of the ultraconservative House Freedom Caucus, voted present as a way of protesting the measure without causing its defeat. And two other Republicans who had expressed opposition to the measure ahead of the vote, Representatives David Schweikert of Arizona and Andrew Garbarino of New York, did not show up to vote. This bill is a debt bomb ticking, Massie said on the House floor ahead of the vote, explaining his opposition. We are not rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic tonight. We are putting coal in the boiler and setting a course for the iceberg. Trump had pressed hard for passage of the bill by visiting the Capitol on Tuesday and meeting with holdouts on Wednesday at the White House. Earlier on Wednesday, his administration put out a statement calling the failure to pass the bill the ultimate betrayal. It is expected to face substantial changes in the Senate. A group of fiscal conservatives has demanded structural changes and cuts to Medicaid and other programs to hold down the overall cost of the bill and rein in deficits. More moderate and politically vulnerable lawmakers have sought to protect Medicaid and fought to preserve clean energy tax credits. Cost estimates for the changes Johnson made late on Wednesday night to the legislation were not yet available. But the bill as originally written had been expected to add trillions to the national debt, which is already at a level that many economists and Wall Street investors find alarming. In a preliminary analysis of an earlier version of the bill, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated that the legislation would add roughly \$2.3 trillion to the debt over the next decade. The deficit hawks have become chicken hawks tonight in submission to Trump, the self-described king of debt. Representative Lloyd Doggett, Democrat of Texas, said on the House floor. In a separate analysis requested by Democrats, the budget office found that the legislation would leave the poorest Americans worse off while providing a lift to the richest. In 2027, the bottom 10 percent would lose the equivalent of 2 percent of their income, largely because of the reduced benefits, while the tax cuts would provide the top 10 percent with a 4 percent increase to their income, the budget office estimated. Before the legislation passed early on Thursday morning, Representative Hakeem Jeffries of New York, the Democratic leader, predicted that votes of Republicans would come back to haunt them at the ballot box. I think that when the story is told of the 119th Congress, when the votes are ultimately cast on that first Tuesday in November next year, Jeffries said, that this day may very well turn out to be the day that House Republicans lost control of the United States. Among the concessions Johnson made to conservatives in the hopes of winning their votes was speeding up when work requirements for Medicaid would kick in, by two years, from 2029 to the end of 2026. The legislation is projected to cause around 10 million Americans to become uninsured, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The bill now also contains a faster phaseout of existing tax credits for low-carbon electricity. Under the new language, companies building solar, wind, geothermal, or battery plants could only claim the credit if they

started construction within 60 days of the bill passing into law and then put the plant in service by the end of 2028 a narrow window that many businesses might struggle to meet In a nod to the blue state Republicans in the conference G O P leaders also included a larger increase to the \$10000 limit on the state and local tax deduction a key demand from a small group of lawmakers from New York New Jersey and California The legislation would set the cap at \$40000 an increase from the \$30000 limit in the earlier draft of the legislation The size of the deduction would shrink for people making more than \$500000 a year rather than the \$400000 level included under the previous version of the bill 6 Canada Province of Alberta Separatism push **RAWSEP View** Human Health threatened by Trumpist Albertans and unregulated oil and gas extraction leading to dirty methods of home heating chosen instead of clean energy Heat Pumps with Heat Pump rebates available in Canada in 2025 **From the article headline** Alberta Stands Apart in Canada Now It Plans a Long Shot Bid to Secede The country is just emerging from a period of political turmoil with a new prime minister in place But now Alberta a conservative Western province is planning a referendum to break away **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** The New York Times May 22 2025 The western province of Alberta is laying the groundwork to hold a referendum asking voters whether they support seceding from Canada While the likelihood of such a divorce ever happening is slim The Constitution of Canada would have to be amended among other obstacles to put the question on the ballot Some Albertans actually prefer becoming a U S state Many Albertans see the Canadian federal system which they see as unfairly limiting the vast oil and gas resources of Alberta while dutifully collecting taxes The province often referred to as The Canadian Texas because its oil and politics is home to a small but dedicated minority of separatists Their voice has been amplified in part because of the Trump calls to annex Canada and by the re election of a Liberal federal government which many in traditionally conservative Alberta view as hostile to their concerns The key argument behind the movement is that Alberta is different enough from the rest of Canada including in its conservative tilt and resource wealth to go it A gambit of the Alberta premier Danielle Smith The Alberta MAGA style conservative leader says she is not personally in favor of Alberta breaking away from Canada She says she is seeking leverage to radically renegotiate the relationship of Alberta with the federal government in Ottawa primarily to unshackle the Alberta oil industry from **regulations meant to address climate change** But she has handcrafted the conditions that will likely lead to the referendum The province of five million residents The Canadian fourth most populous is home to the Canadian lucrative oil and gas industry whose products are mostly exported to the United States **Former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promoted climate focused policies like emission caps and strict environmental assessments over his decade in office** Critics say that these limited the ability of Alberta to fully extract and export its mineral and fossil fuel After the change in the Canadian leadership Danielle Smith did not wait a full 24 hours after the Mark Carney re election on April 28 as Prime Minister to fire her opening salvo The next day she introduced a bill which the Alberta legislature recently passed making it much easier for a movement of citizens to trigger a referendum The new rules slash the number of signatures of citizens required for a referendum from 600000 signatures to about 177000 They also give petitioners an extra month to collect signatures increasing the window from 90 days to 120 Beside complaints about not reaping the benefits of its vast energy resources Alberta has diverged from Canada especially regarding **vaccines during the pandemic with many accusing the federal government of imposing public health mandates that restricted their freedom**