“I am very annoyed”: Pharma execs blast RFK Jr.’s attack on vaccines

Waiting for the midterms

But pharmaceutical executives don’t appear comforted by the pushback. “Today it may be childhood vaccines or mRNA, but tomorrow it’s everything,” Noubar Afeyan, co-founder and chairman of Moderna, maker of mRNA vaccines, said. “We have to say not just ‘why is this happening?,’ but ‘Where will it stop?’”

As a bad flu season is underway, Dean Li, president of Merck Research Laboratories, noted that the anti-vaccine rhetoric is hitting seasonal flu shots. “With the pressure on vaccination, I cannot foresee flu vaccination increasing in this country over the next three years,” he said in a presentation.

Sanofi Chief Executive Paul Hudson had a similarly pessimistic outlook. “It’s clear this administration has a particular sensitivity around vaccination, and indeed pediatric vaccination,” Hudson said. “I’m asked all the time ‘what are you going to do to fix this?,’ and the truth is we just need to stay extremely objective and continue presenting the evidence. There’s really very little else we can do,” except wait for the midterm elections, he said.

“We will have to maintain a steely focus on the long-term future of vaccines and deal with any uncertainty around vaccine coverage rates in the short-term based on misinformation, Facebook posts, and statements from the top,” he said.

Bourla also worried about the conditions Kennedy is creating to attack drug makers. Kennedy, who is an environmental lawyer with no scientific or medical background, has profited from lawsuits against vaccine makers, as have many of his allies and advisors. “There is also a lot of plaintiffs’ playbook there,” Bourla said. “Everybody will start litigating.”

https://arstechnica.com/health/2026/01/big-pharma-is-openly-railing-against-rfk-jr-s-anti-vaccine-agenda/