

# [***Here s Why Trump s Team Appears Worried About RFK Jr. s Presidential Bid***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69BP-XSK1-JBCM-F00C-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Kennedy teased an independent run at a rally Thursday night, telling supporters he would reveal whether he s running on an independent campaign by Monday.

**Body**

**Topline**

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who is expected to announce Monday he ll run as an independent candidate for president, has reportedly provoked anxiety in Donald Trump s campaign team, according toSemafor, potentially marking the start of a coordinated offensive against RFK Jr.

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Kennedy announced his candidacy for president on April 19 in Boston, Massachusetts. (Photo by Scott Eisen/Getty Images)

Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Trump internal campaign polling cited, though not reviewed bySemafor, suggests Kennedy s independent bid could draw more votes away from Trump than from President Joe Biden during a general election.

An unnamed source familiar with the poll told Semafor RFK Jr. could take enough votes to make a difference, despite the relatively low numbers the presidential candidate could take in.

The threat has provoked the organization of an opposition campaign against Kennedy, one that will revolve around his very liberal views, dating back to 2012.

Kennedy, whowill speakat a Conservative Political Action Conference event later this month, hasexpressed views cateringto the conspiratorial right despite launching a campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in April.

He has been boosted by popular media figures associated with independent or conservative leanings, like an interview with andfavorable commentsfrom podcaster Joe Rogan, aninterview with former Fox News commentator Tucker Carlson and a two-and-a-half hour discussion with tech billionaireElon Muskon Twitter Spaces.

Kennedy has also enjoyed support from Republican figures including Rep. Chip Roy (R-Tex.) and Rep. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), both of whom backed up the presidential candidate during his testimony at acongressional hearingin July.

**Tangent**

Trump commands about a 1 point lead over Biden in the general election polling average as of this week, according toRealClearPolitics.

**Crucial Quote**

I ll be speaking about a sea change in American ***politics***, Kennedy said in anannouncement videofor his upcoming appearance in Philadelphia on Monday, adding criticisms about corruption he claims has spread to the leadership in both political parties.

**Key Background**

Kennedy s potential independent run would likely be fueled by frustrations the presidential candidate has had with the Democratic party, some of which are based on the idea that the party is conspiring to rig the primaries against him, according toNBC News. Kennedy has rallied fringe support through several conspiracy theories revolving around subjects like stolen presidential elections, Covid-19 and the Covid-19 vaccine, most notably saying at a July dinner that Covid-19 wasgenetically engineeredto target Caucasians and Black people while the people who are most immune are Ashkenazi Jews and Chinese. Kennedy s super-PAC has receivedstrong supportfrom GOP megadonors, reporting a $5 million donation from Trump donor Timothy Mellon, which was provided not long before Kennedy launched his presidential campaign in April. Mellon supported Kennedy in a statement reported byon Monday in which he lauded his bipartisan support, saying the presidential candidate could root out corruption and unite the country. Security consultant Gavin De Becker provided RFK Jr. s super-PAC with $4.5 million in late June. De Becker has a history of funding Republicans and Democrats.

**Further Reading**

Team Trump readies attacks on RFK Jr. as spoiler anxiety grows(Semafor)

Here s How Much Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Is Worth(Forbes)

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