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[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Fauci in Hot Seat on Capitol Hill]

HALLIE JACKSON: Meantime, the spotlight is on Capitol Hill this morning, where Dr. Anthony Fauci, who helped lead the U.S. response to COVID, is appearing in front of a Senate committee, a hearing that is expected to be contentious after the public release of entries from Dr. Fauci's personal journal. Our Monica Alba has that story. Hey, Mon. Good morning.

MONICA ALBA: Hey, Hallie. Good morning to you. That's right. Dr. Fauci became a household name during the pandemic, serving both President Trump and President Biden as a top public health expert. But it's his private reflections that are now gaining attention after a Republican Senator posted them online as part of an ongoing probe into the origins of the virus, all setting the stage for what is expected to be a fiery hearing today on Capitol Hill. New revelations this morning from Dr. Anthony Fauci's personal journal, published by Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, who is clashed with the former infectious disease expert for years.

FAUCI [on 07/20/21]: [I]f anyone is lying here, senator, it is you.

ALBA: Most notably, over whether COVID-19 leaked from a lab in China, or came from a market in Wuhan featuring exotic animals.

SENATOR RAND PAUL (R-KY): We put the evidence into the public sphere. So, I would just suggest that he tell the truth, and if he tells the truth, he has no liability.

ALBA: In January of 2020, weeks before the world shut down, Fauci wrote, "Now we know the market was not the source., it was the amplifier. Having said that, somewhere the virus jumped from animals to human." In the past, Fauci has said he was open to the lab-leak theory.

FAUCI [on NBC's *Meet the Press*, 11/27/22]: I have a completely open mind about that, despite people saying that I don't.

ALBA: Still, Senator Paul posting he'll be asking Fauci "under subpoena" about what he calls "the COVID cover-up." Fauci, in the more than 1,100 release pages, also reflecting on his newfound fame, including conversations with celebrities like Barbara Streisand, who asked about vaccines and Julia Roberts, who called him her personal hero. Fauci writing, "It is not hyperbole to say that today I am the most famous, and talked about person in the country and one of the most recognizable." Throughout the entries, Fauci makes his feelings about President Trump known, calling him a "true embarrassment" and saying he was "spewing nonsense" in the weeks before the 2020 election shortly after the President had been hospitalized for COVID, and when Mr. Trump said he was "considering firing" Fauci.

TRUMP RALLY CROWD [in November 2020]: Fire Fauci

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP [in November 2020]: I don't tell anybody, but let me wait till a little bit after the election.

ALBA: President Trump on Tuesday.

TRUMP [on FNC's *Fox & Friends*, 07/28/26]: I grew tired of him. I wasn't very close to him. I dealt with him very little. I didn't agree with many of the things he said.

ALBA: Now, in one of his last acts before leaving office, former President Biden issued Dr. Fauci a preemptive pardon in anticipation of future political targeting, but Republicans argue that wouldn't apply to new statements made today, Hallie.

JACKSON: We'll be tracking that. Monica, thank you.