

NBC's *Today*
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7:01:12 a.m. [TEASE]
32 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Senate Showdown]

CRAIG MELVIN: Senate showdown. Republicans threatening to hold Dr. Anthony Fauci in contempt after his heated appearance on Capitol Hill.

SENATOR BERNIE MORENO (R-OH): It is a total disgrace what you did to this country.

MELVIN: Fauci invoking the Fifth Amendment more than 100 times and refusing to answer any questions.

SENATOR JOSH HAWLEY (R-MO) [TO FAUCI]: What color's the carpet in front of you?

DR. ANTHONY FAUCI: On the advice of counsel, I respectfully decline to answer.

MELVIN: Now, what's next for the nation's former top health official? We'll have the very latest.

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7:11:16 a.m.
2 minutes and 55 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Fauci Invokes 5th Amendment in Fiery Hearing]

HALLIE JACKSON: To that heated hearing now on Capitol Hill, which saw Dr. Anthony Fauci refuse to answer repeated questions about his handling of the COVID pandemic. The nation's former top health official, pleading the Fifth more than 100 times, and Republicans are now threatening to hold him in contempt of Congress. Our Monica Alba has that story. Hey, Monica, morning.

MONICA ALBA: Hey, Hallie, good morning. This hearing was supposed to be part of an investigation into the origins of COVID-19, and the government's response, but instead, it highlighted the deep, partisan divisions that still exist over the pandemic years later. This morning, Dr. Anthony Fauci facing a new threat: a potential contempt of Congress vote after refusing more than 100 times to answer questions Wednesday during a contentious Senate hearing.

FAUCI: On the advice of counsel, I respectfully decline to answer based upon my rights under the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution.

ALBA: The former director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, calling the Republican chairman Senator Rand Paul “unhinged.”

FAUCI: The sole reason he is calling me before this committee is to get me to say something, anything that could vindicate his repeated public pledges that I end up in his words “behind bars.”

ALBA: Senator Paul, who’s accused Fauci of what he calls a COVID cover-up, saying his committee will vote next week on whether Fauci violated the law.

SENATOR RAND PAUL [on FNC’s *The Will Cain Show*, 07/29/26]: If that resolution passes our committee, which it will, that it could simply be referred directly to the Department of Justice.

ALBA: During the nearly three-hour hearing, Republicans repeatedly slamming Fauci, who was a key member of the White House COVID Task Force for both the Trump and Biden administrations.

MORENO: It is a total disgrace what you did to this country.

HAWLEY [TO FAUCI]: What color’s the carpet in front of you?

FAUCI: On the advice of counsel, I respectfully decline to answer.

HAWLEY: You could sit for *In Style* magazine, but you can’t answer questions for the American people.

ALBA: President Trump once had this to say about individuals who refuse to answer questions under oath —

TRUMP [in September 2016]: You see, the mob takes it. If you’re innocent, why are you taking the Fifth Amendment?

ALBA: — but later invoked the Fifth Amendment himself more than 400 times in a civil case in New York. After the hearing, the President asked about Fauci’s decision.

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP: I’ve never been a big fan of Fauci. Why he did that was very simple: his lawyers told him to.

ALBA: Committee Democrats, suggesting Fauci, who by his own count has testified before Congress more than 200 times during his decades in public health, made the right call.

SENATOR RICHARD BLUMENTHAL (D-CT): If this proceeding smacks of a show trial or vendetta —

ALBA: And the pardon that Fauci received from former President Biden would not apply to any criminal charges that could come from yesterday's refusal to answer questions, which is ultimately up to the DOJ, while Fauci's attorney says they are completely confident that Fauci was on solid ground in asserting his Fifth Amendment right, Hallie.

JACKSON: Monica Alba, thank you.