

War on Fraud: \$1 Trillion in Taxpayer Money at Risk Every Year

Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche announced Tuesday that the Department of Justice is running more than 8,000 active fraud investigations targeting schemes that drain federal programs, with over a trillion dollars in taxpayer funds exposed annually.

Blanche held his first press conference since being elevated to acting AG last week following President Trump's removal of Pam Bondi. He said the DOJ had secured hundreds of millions in guilty pleas just in recent weeks, but stressed the recoveries "represent a fraction of the fraud ripping off our country every day."

"With over a trillion dollars at stake every single year threatened by increasingly sophisticated and opportunistic fraudsters," Blanche said, "fraudsters, scammers, tax cheats or anyone who lies to get rich off the generosity of the American people should be on notice."



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Among the recent wins Blanche highlighted: a South Florida insurance brokerage firm pleaded guilty to an Affordable Care Act enrollment scheme totaling more than \$160 million. A California man separately pleaded guilty to submitting \$270 million in fraudulent claims through California's Medicaid program for high-cost prescription drugs. Altogether, the DOJ has secured guilty pleas representing roughly half a billion dollars in health care and COVID fraud.

To escalate the effort, DOJ has established a National Fraud

Enforcement Division dedicated to managing the growing caseload. Prosecutors will work alongside Vice President JD Vance's interagency task force, which has already moved to claw back funds from states with lax oversight.

In February, Vance and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz yanked \$259.5 million in federal funds from Minnesota. California and New York have also been put on notice through the task force and parallel congressional investigations.

"A lot of the anti-fraud protections that existed in our government for a very long time were actually turned off by the Biden administration," Blanche told reporters, though he did not elaborate further on the specific rollbacks.

Blanche, who previously served as Trump's personal defense attorney, is serving in the acting capacity for up to 210 days while awaiting Senate confirmation. He declined to say why Bondi was removed, telling reporters only that "nobody has any idea why the attorney general is no longer the attorney general and I'm the acting attorney general, except for President Trump."

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