



ANTHONY G. BROWN, MARYLAND ATTORNEY GENERAL

PRESS RELEASE

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Media Contacts:
press@oag.state.md.us
410-576-7009

Attorney General Brown Sues Trump Administration Over Illegal Funding Cuts and Delays for Medical and Public Health Research

BALTIMORE, MD (April 4, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined a coalition of 16 attorneys general in suing the Trump administration in the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts over its unlawful attempt to disrupt grant funding issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The [lawsuit](#) challenges the administration’s unreasonable and intentional delays in reviewing NIH grant applications, as well as its termination of hundreds of already-issued grants.

“The Trump administration’s reckless and politically motivated interference with NIH grant funding is an attack on the very institutions that power scientific innovation and medical breakthroughs,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “This administration is jeopardizing public health and undermining decades of scientific progress with its shameless disregard for the truth and the well-being of our communities. We will not let this egregious assault on science and public health go unchecked.”

Typically, NIH grant applications must undergo two layers of review: review by a “study section” of subject-matter experts who assess the scientific merit of the proposal, and review by an advisory council that considers funding availability and agency priorities. Since January, the administration has cancelled upcoming meetings for both of these review bodies and has delayed the scheduling of future meetings. Further, NIH has indefinitely withheld issuing final decisions on applications that have already received approval from the relevant study section and advisory council. Currently, the plaintiff states are awaiting decisions on billions of dollars in requested research funding.

The complaint also alleges that NIH has recently terminated large swaths of already-issued grants for projects that are currently underway based on the projects’ perceived connection to “DEI,” “transgender issues,” “vaccine hesitancy,” or another topic disfavored by the current administration. In boilerplate letters issued to the grants’ recipients, NIH claims that each cancelled project “no longer effectuates agency priorities.” With these shoddy explanations, the complaint alleges, the Trump administration has clawed back millions of dollars that have already been awarded to address important public health needs.

As a result of the administration's delays and terminations, the states allege that their public research institutions have experienced significant harm. For example, NIH has terminated 11 grants amounting to approximately \$15 million in research funding for University of Maryland Baltimore and 9 grants amounting to approximately \$1 million in research funding for University of Maryland College Park.

The coalition argues that by postponing meetings, delaying the review of pending applications, failing to issue final recommendations, and terminating issued grants, NIH is failing to meet its statutory obligations and violating applicable regulations. Further, the coalition argues that the administration does not have the authority to unilaterally decline spending congressionally appropriated funds.

The coalition is asking the Court to compel the administration to promptly review and issue decisions on delayed grant applications and prohibit them from terminating already-awarded grants.

On February 10, Attorney General Brown joined a coalition of 22 attorneys general in [filing a lawsuit](#) against the administration for its attempts to unilaterally cut "indirect cost" reimbursements for NIH grants at nearly every research institution in the country. On March 5, a federal judge [issued a preliminary injunction](#) against the administration, preventing it from cutting the funding as the case proceeds.

Attorney General Brown is leading today's lawsuit alongside the attorneys general of California, Massachusetts and Washington. Joining the lawsuit are the attorneys general of Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.

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