The ACADEMY for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Research

Advancing Innovation in Imaging Science

October 31, 2025

Academy Policy & Legislative Update

Dear Academy Friends,

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Halloween! While I tend to favor the sparkle of the holiday season, my husband fully embraces the spirit of Halloween and is eager to welcome the evening's parade of costumed visitors. Unfortunately, like many federal employees, he's still facing more "tricks" than "treats" as the government shutdown continues.

Shutdown Update, Tricks and Treats?

- Start with treats. We are hearing from several key congressional leaders that once the shutdown ends, Congress will be ready to pass the FY2026 appropriations bills.
- More treats – Democrat and Republican Senators have been meeting to find a path out of the shutdown. Reports suggest some movement in these negotiations.
- Now for some tricks. We expect this will become the longest shutdown in history. The longest was 35 days under the first Trump administration.
- More tricks—today, NIH employees received an updated memo about the shutdown. It REMOVED language about backpay that appeared in a similar email sent out a month ago.
- Even more tricks—the shutdown, due to furloughs, is causing a permanent loss of between $7 billion $14 billion in economic output and shave up to two percentage points off fourth-quarter growth. While some of that loss may be recouped once agencies reopen, reduced spending and delayed federal activity will continue to slow recovery even after a deal is reached. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) issued a report on the impact of the shutdown.

The Academy created this FAQ to help answer any questions you may have about how the ongoing shutdown affects the extramural research community.

Academy Membership Programming Survey

We've put together a survey to gauge the interests of our membership so that we can provide programming opportunities that you want to participate in. Please complete this survey and leave all feedback you may have. Thank you!

HHS Performance Reviews to be Based on Loyalty to Trump Administration

The Trump Administration is utilizing a new metric to gauge job performance at the Department of Health and Human Services: whether the employees "clearly and demonstrably support implementation of the President's policy priorities through specific results that align with and advance the President's specific policy agenda."

The first criterion, out of the four that guide performance reviews, is described as "Faithful support of Administration of the Law and the President's Policies," suggesting that staff must demonstrate their loyalty to the administration.

This is an attempt to politicize federal workers who, historically, are not meant to be loyal to any politician's agenda. Instead, federal workers are meant to serve the best interests of the American public.

HHS is already experiencing the negative impacts of the government shutdown and significant workforce cuts. So, this update to performance reviews adds additional stress to an already challenging situation. It's an opportunity for the Trump Administration to justify additional firings in the event that employees do not adhere to the updated performance reviews.

For additional details, read the article here.

- **On Capitol Hill**
  This week, the Senate HELP Committee held a hearing focused on the future of biotech, with an emphasis on propelling treatments for patients and maintaining U.S. leadership in the biotech arena. The six witnesses, ranging from the CEO of BIO to practicing physicians in rural and underserved areas, connected the dots between robust NIH investment, biotech, and the solutions patients need. "Congress must reestablish the normal flow of research funding before the U.S. scientific establishment and a new generation of innovative biotechnology treatments are irreparably damaged," said Aaron Kesselheim, MD, JD, MPH, of Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.

  The witnesses warned the committee that America risks losing its industry dominance. Sen. Andy Kim (D-NJ) said the committee and the nation must embrace the urgency of the competition it faces from China. Kim added that the innovative use of artificial intelligence could be key to accelerating drug research.

- **On October 29**, House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) outlined potential Republican priorities for a year-end health care deal once the government reopens, including funding the ACA cost-sharing reduction (CSR) payments, reforming pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), and expanding individual coverage health reimbursement arrangements. While some proposals, like PBM reform, have bipartisan appeal, GOP opposition to extending enhanced ACA subsidies remains a key obstacle to an agreement.

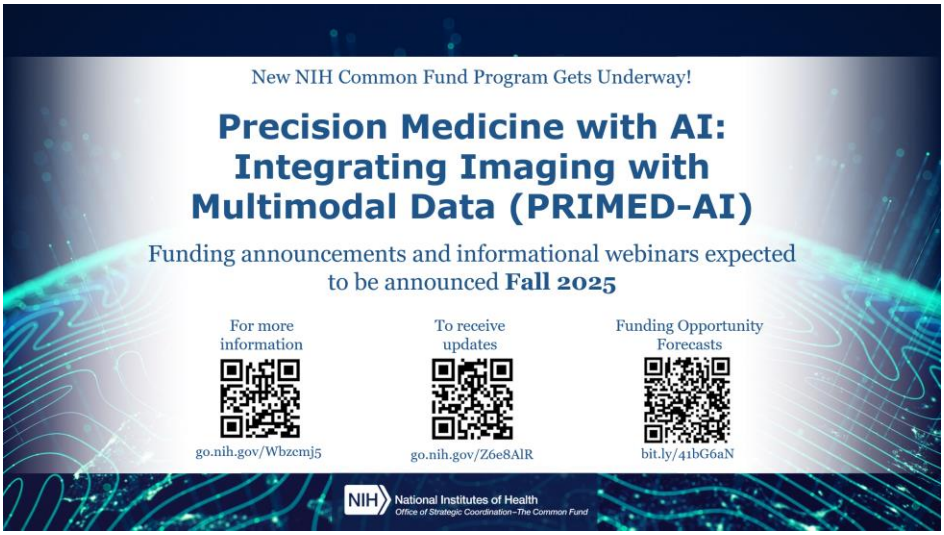
- A recent **JAMA study** warns that the Trump administration's proposed $100,000 fee for new H-1B visa applicants could worsen doctor shortages in rural and low-income areas. Researchers found that physicians on H-1B visas are disproportionately likely to work in underserved communities, with rural counties having nearly twice as many visa-sponsored doctors as urban ones. Health groups and some lawmakers are urging the administration to grant broader exemptions for medical professionals to prevent further strain on the health care workforce.

Inside NIH

As a reminder, beginning October 1, 2025, **NIH will no longer post Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) in the NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts**. You can utilize NIH's new tool to explore NIH Grant Opportunities to identify NOFOs posted in Grants.gov. The NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts will continue to be the source for NIH policy and informational notices.

NIH encourages researchers to view the NIH Highlighted Topics tool to identify scientific areas of particular interest to the NIH when considering topics for investigator-initiated grant applications. NIH recently added more topics and plans to continue adding more when the government reopens.

More info to follow on this NIH program after the government re-opens…….



Together, we can amplify our voices to ensure continued investment in imaging science. Advocacy is important. The Academy has compiled a document that includes best practices for advocacy, scheduling meetings, and preparing for conversations with your member. For a sample document to send to your elected official, click here. Do not hesitate to reach out with questions or requests for help - that is what we are here for!

Academy "Funding, Facts, and Follow Up" Emails. Weekly updates and funding opportunities: Click here to access an archive of the weekly emails we send out, including our the most recent.

MEDIA

"Ex-OSTP director: Trump funding cuts are 'assault' on public research investment"

"NIH scientists avoid 'banned words' to keep their research funded"

"Florida Universities to Stop Hiring Foreign H-1B Workers Under DeSantis Plan"

*Thank you for following these Academy updates! If your department, society, or company isn't yet a supporting Member, now is a great time to join. Your support powers our advocacy efforts and helps advance the interests of our entire community.

Discover The Value of the Academy in this short clip and explore our membership [here]. For personalized guidance or questions, connect with Josie Wilkinson Miller at jwilkinson@acadrad.org —we'd love to hear from you!