

CU Federal Relations Monthly Update - 10.31.25 ^[1]

October 31, 2025 by [Riley Black](#) ^[2]

Shutdown and FY26 Appropriation Update

The federal government remains closed and negotiations are at an impasse.

The Senate has rejected House-passed stopgap funding legislation (H.R. 5371 ^[3]) thirteen times so far. Senate Democrats maintain they will continue to vote against stopgap funding until there are bipartisan negotiations to extend expiring Affordable Care Act healthcare subsidies. The Senate has also rejected legislation to pay select federal government workers, including the military, during the shutdown. The House remains in extended recess.

Federal civilian employees have begun to miss paychecks. Active-duty military and federal workers are poised to miss paychecks on Nov. 1, absent an extension in funding. Federal food assistance payments will also stop on Nov. 1, with [Colorado](#) ^[4] set to lose \$120 million per month. However, two federal judges ruled on October 31 that the federal government must use contingency funds to partially fund the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), [reports](#) ^[5] *The Denver Post*. Other shutdown effects include Head Start and WIC nutrition payment cuts, [reports](#) ^[6] *POLITICO*.

For more information on the federal shutdown, please refer to our weekly federal updates, which can be found in the "Federal Relations Communications" tab on the [Federal Updates and Actions page](#) ^[7].

CU Boulder Hosts Lecture Series on Federal Governance

CU Boulder hosted two events as part of its series "Federal Governance and Higher Education: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?" The series, which is now in its second year, examines the future of higher education, impacts of federal policy and response from the higher education community. More about the series can be read at [CU Boulder Today](#) ^[8].

The first event, "[The 'Big Beautiful Bill' and Beyond—Federal Legislation and Higher Education](#)" ^[9] occurred on Sept. 30 and examined the 2025 reconciliation bill and its policy implications for higher education. Heather Bené, Senior Associate Vice President of Federal Relations, participated along with CU Boulder panelists Oded Gurantz, Associate Professor and Chair of Research and Evaluation Methodology Program; Amy Hutton, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; and Massimo Ruzzene, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation and Dean of the Institutes.

The second event, "[Collective Action and Higher Education: Prospects and Perils](#)" ^[10], was

held Oct. 28. The discussion focused on how universities and higher education associations are responding to federal policy changes. Danielle Radovich Piper, Senior Vice President for External Relations and Strategy, participated along with CU Boulder participants Ann Stevens, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; and David Meens, Executive Director, Office for Public & Community-Engaged Scholarship.

Rep. Neguse Hosts “Congress on Your Corner” at CU Boulder

Rep. Joe Neguse held a “Congress on Your Corner” ^[11] at CU Boulder on Oct.12, where he spoke to students and campus community members.

Sen. Hickenlooper Highlights CU Anschutz Research in Senate Hearing

Sen. John Hickenlooper highlighted medical research conducted at CU Anschutz during a Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) committee hearing about the future of biotech ^[12] on Oct. 29. Sen. Hickenlooper noted research to develop Shingles vaccines ^[13] and to use Neuropixels to study the impact of Parkinson’s disease on the brain ^[14] pioneered at CU Anschutz to underscore the positive impacts of National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding.

Recent CU Advocacy Letters

The CU System, CU Anschutz, CU Boulder, CU Denver and UCCS signed onto a letter ^[15] from the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research urging robust funding for NIH and the Advanced Research Project Agency for Health (ARPA-H). The letter, addressed to congressional appropriations leaders on Oct. 27, highlighted the benefits of medical research conducted by both agencies and expressed support for the Senate’s proposed budget funding levels.

CU Anschutz, CU Boulder, CU Denver and UCCS signed a community letter on Oct. 22 urging Congress to sustain funding for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic (SBE) Sciences Directorate at the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Recent Congressional Staff Visits

Staff from the offices of Reps. Diana DeGette, Joe Neguse, Jeff Crank, Jason Crow and Gabe Evans joined CU at the CU Leadership Speakers Series Event ^[16], CU Denver SPA’s October First Friday Event ^[17], CU Boulder’s Indigenous People’s Day Event, ^[18] and the CU Anschutz Helen and Arthur E. Johnson Depression Center’s Annual Luncheon ^[19].

Recent Hill Visits

Massimo Ruzzene, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation and Dean of the Institutes at CU Boulder, participated in Hill visits ^[20] alongside other Association of American University (AAU) senior research officers (SRO) on October 7 and 8. Ruzzene currently serves on AAU’s SRO steering committee.

Recent Federal Grants Awarded

UCCS received notice of their new TRiO Student Support Services ^[21] grant from the

Department of Education in October.

NSF also awarded CU faculty several new awards this fall. One notable example is Chelsea Magin (CU Anschutz | CU Denver), who received an [ExLENT initiative](#) [22] grant to expand life sciences workforce pathways and support the [CU Denver Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs \(QA/RA\) Certificate Program](#) [23], where students get hands on experience at CU Anschutz Bioengineering labs. Sen. Michael Bennet said “I’m thrilled the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz received nearly \$1 million for this upskill program targeting biotechnology careers. Students want to build sustainable futures, Colorado has companies ready to hire them, and now we are investing in the programs that train them and contributing to U.S. leadership in biotech innovation.” Read more about the project at [CU Denver College of Engineering, Design and Computing News](#) [24].

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) also recently renewed its Professional Research Experience Program (PREP) program at CU Boulder for another five years. [CU PREP](#) [25] enables CU undergraduate and graduate students as well as researchers to work in NIST labs alongside NIST researchers. It’s a 30-year partnership, which has contributed to the experiential education of hundreds of students and post-doctoral associates.

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[17] <https://calendar.ucdenver.edu/event/spa-first-friday-october-2025>
[18] <https://www.colorado.edu/leadershipsupport/indigenous-peoples-day>
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[20] https://www.linkedin.com/posts/massimo-ruzzene-4771334_i-was-pleased-to-join-my-fellow-aau-senior-activity-7382920851060469760-yUtK?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAC21rhCB5KzK0-iQzv09znM03XFV0U0I8n0 [21] <https://news.uccs.edu/2025/10/17/uccs-awarded-trio-student-support-services-grant/> [22] <https://www.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/exlent-experiential-learning-emerging-novel-technologies> [23] <https://engineering.ucdenver.edu/bioengineering/certificate-programs/quality-assurance-and-regulatory-affairs> [24] <https://ucdenverengineeringnews.com/2025/10/01/the-future-of-biotech-starts-here-cu-denveranschutz-program-bridges-education-and-industry/> [25] <https://www.colorado.edu/program/cuprep/>