

CU Federal Relations Monthly Update - 4.30.26 ^[1]

April 30, 2026 by [Riley Black](#) ^[2]

FY27 Appropriations Update

Congress is working on the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) appropriation process. House appropriations subcommittees began marking up the twelve annual spending bills this month. Appropriations subcommittees have approved bills for Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies; Financial Services & General Government; Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, & Related Agencies; National Security, Department of State, & Related Agencies; Legislative Branch; and Commerce, Justice, Science, & Related Agencies. The bills for [Financial Services & General Government](#) ^[3]; [Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, & Related Agencies](#) ^[4]; National Security, Department of State, & Related Agencies; and Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, & Related Agencies have been approved by the full Appropriations committee. The full House markup schedule can be found [here](#) ^[5]. The Senate Appropriations committee has not announced their markup schedule.

The University of Colorado federal relations team actively advocates for funding for programs which support our students and researchers, including federal financial aid and numerous research agencies and programs. We have submitted CU-specific requests to Congress, signed stakeholder support letters, urged our members to lead and sign dear colleague letters, and brought CU leadership, faculty and students to Capitol Hill to champion university priorities.

CDS/CPF Funding Requests for CU Campuses

Community Project Funding requests for all four campuses were included in the FY27 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill approved by the House CJS Appropriations Subcommittee. A full table of requests included in the bill can be found [here](#) ^[6].

Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper submitted FY27 Congressionally Directed Spending requests for CU Boulder, CU Anschutz, and UCCS. The Senate Appropriations Committee will review and announce projects included in FY27 appropriations bills later this summer.

Colorado Senators Sign DCLs

During April, CU Federal Relations advocated for Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper to sign onto dear colleague letters (DCLs) in support of FY27 funding for HRSA, DOE's Office of Science, NSF, NASA's Science Mission Directorate, SEOG/Federal Work Study, Title VI/Fulbright Hays, TRIO, NIST, NIH, and other CU priorities. Notably, Sen. Hickenlooper led the first-ever

Senate DCL at CU's request in support of NOAA's Regional Integrated Sciences Assessments (RISA) program, which funds the Western Water Assessment at CU Boulder. Sen. Hickenlooper also led the NIST DCL again this year.

FY26 Appropriations Update

The House approved a Senate-passed bill funding most of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including TSA, FEMA, and the Coast Guard, for the remainder of FY26 on April 30. The bill was passed by voice vote and is expected to be signed quickly by President Trump, ending the partial government shutdown after 76 days. Funding for Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is not included in this bill. The House approved a Senate-passed budget blueprint on April 29 that unlocks the ability to draft reconciliation language that would provide funding for CBP and ICE. More can be read in [POLITICO](#) [7].

Rep. Neguse Speaks at CU Boulder CWA

Rep. Joe Neguse participated in a panel on higher education and democracy at the [Conference on World Affairs](#) [8] at CU Boulder on April 13. The panel focused on how universities, including CU Boulder, can sustain civic engagement and free inquiry in the face of current challenges to higher education.

Sen. Hickenlooper Visits LASP, Quantum Commons

Sen. John Hickenlooper [visited](#) [9] the [Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics](#) [10] (LASP) at CU Boulder on April 3. While there, he toured LASP facilities and learned about LASP's scientific research and workforce training. CU Regent Ilana Spiegel, CU Boulder Chancellor Justin Schwartz, CU Boulder Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation Massimo Ruzzene, and LASP Director Bethany Ehlmann participated in the visit.

Sen. Hickenlooper also [visited](#) [11] the Quantum Commons in Arvada on April 3. During the visit, CU Denver, Front Range Community College and Elevate Quantum signed an MOU to collaborate between their workforce quantum programs and the cryogenic lab at Quantum Commons. CU Denver Provost Karen Marrongelle, along with faculty members Bodhi Rogers, Physics Department Chair and Martin Huber, Physics Professor, participated in the event.

CU Boulder Hosts 2026 CO Climate Week Events

CU Boulder and Chancellor Justin Schwartz hosted [Colorado Climate Week](#) [12] events on campus on April 1. Hundreds of participants joined to hear from speakers highlighting Colorado as a hub for innovation and resilience. Sen. Michael Bennet and Attorney General Phil Weiser participated in a fireside chat, speaking to their visions for Colorado's climate future. Rep. Joe Neguse and Governor Jared Polis also joined to speak to their efforts nationally and locally on climate and energy policy, including geothermal. More about the event can be read at [CU Boulder Today](#). [13]

Annual Space Symposium in Colorado Springs

Space Foundation's annual [Space Symposium](#) [14] was held in Colorado Springs on April 13-16, bringing together thousands of attendees and space experts from industry, government,

and the military. Reps. Jeff Crank, Brian Babin (TX-36), Michael Rogers (AL-03), and George Whitesides (CA-27) spoke during the event, as well as [NASA Administrator Jared Issacman](#) [15], Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Michael Kratsios, and other senior officials from NASA, government, industry, and the military. Dan Baker, Director of the Colorado Space Policy Center at CU Boulder, also spoke at the symposium. [CU Boulder's LASP](#) [16] and [UCCS' \[17\] Colleges of Business and Engineering and Applied Science](#) were exhibitors and had a chance to connect with Gov. Polis, Lt. Gov. Primavera and others.

Recent Capitol Hill Visits

Ben Livneh, Director, and Benét Duncan, Managing Director of the [Western Water Assessment](#) [18] (WWA) at CU Boulder, met with staff from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the Senate Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee; the offices of Sens. Bennet, Hickenlooper, and Curtis (UT); and the offices of Reps. Neguse and Hurd on April 14-15.

CU Boulder PhD students participating in the American Associations for the advancement of Science Catalyzing Advocacy in Science and Engineering ([AAAS CASE](#) [19]) Workshop met with staff from the offices of Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper and Reps. Neguse and Panetta (CA-19) on April 15.

Aimee Merkel, Research Scientist, and Adrian Bryant, Graduate Research Assistant at [LASP](#) [10] met with staff from the offices of Rep. Neguse, Hurd, and Crank on April 21. Merkel and Bryant also presented at a showcase held in the Senate highlighting NASA-funded science and workforce training organized by the Planetary Society, Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU), Association of American Universities (AAU), University of Colorado, and other scientific associations. Bethany Ehlmann, Director of LASP, also attended some of the congressional meetings as well as the showcase.

Recent Colorado Events

CU Anschutz hosted their annual Transforming Healthcare lecture on April 28. The lecture focused on how lab discoveries at CU Anschutz have advanced scientific breakthroughs in treatments for diabetes, obesity, cancer, and other diseases. Staff from the offices of Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper and Reps. Pettersen and Evans attended the lecture.

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