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CU Federal Relations Update - 4.30.24 [1]

April 30, 2024 by Riley Black [2]

Welcome to the relaunched federal update. These updates will inform you about important news from our nation's capital that impacts CU and are created by CU's Federal Relations team in the Office of Government Relations.

Since our last update, two new staff members [3] have joined the Federal Relations team. Annie Larson is the Assistant Vice President of Federal Relations and Outreach, who serves as the federal liaison for CU Denver and UCCS and provides staff support out of our Denver office. Riley Black is the Federal Relations Assistant and supports the federal relations team with administrative, research, and event planning tasks.

As a reintroduction, other Federal Relations staff includes Heather Bené, the Associate Vice President of Research and Federal Policy, who serves as the federal liaison for CU Boulder; Brett Roude, the Assistant Vice President of Federal Relations and Health Policy, who serves as the liaison for CU Anschutz; and Natalie Barry, the Director of Federal Relations and Operations.

More information on our office can be found on the CU Federal Relations website [4].

First Lady Dr. Jill Biden Visits CU Anschutz to Discuss Women's Health Research
On April 20, First Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, toured the Ludeman Family Center for Women's Health Research at CU Anschutz and participated in a roundtable discussing women's health. Colorado Lieutenant Governor Dianne Primavera, Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman, and CU President Todd Saliman also attended the event. Dr. Biden noted, "The University of Colorado is making a tremendous difference. And we are at an incredible inflection point, ready to make significant advances in woman-focused medical research." A clip of the event can be found at 9News [5] and more information can be found at the CU Anschutz newsroom [6].

Chancellor DiStefano and Student Leaders Visit Hill
CU Boulder Chancellor Phil DiStefano, Director of the Center for Leadership Stefanie Johnson, and student leaders met with Colorado congressional leaders and their staff in D.C. on April 9. The group, who met with Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper and Rep. Pettersen, discussed the importance of strong and consistent federal funding for research, growing the federal Pell Grant, and programming from the Center for Leadership. The Chancellor also hosted a breakfast on the Hill and an evening reception for CU alumni in DC. More about the visit can be found at *CU Boulder Today* [7].

Department of Education Releases Final Title IX Rule

The U.S. Department of Education released its final Title IX rules on April 19, with an effective date of August 1, 2024. According to the Department's fact sheet [8], the new rules prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, strengthen protections against all forms of sex-based harassment, protect students from discrimination based on pregnancy or childbirth, protect students who seek to avail their Title IX rights from retaliation, and require schools to promptly address all complaints of sex discrimination with a "fair, transparent and reliable process." CU is reviewing the regulations to ensure the university is in compliance with the new rules by August 1. More information can be found from the American Council on Education [9].

Department of Labor Releases Final Overtime Rule

The U.S. Department of Labor released its final overtime rules on April 23, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. The rule raises the overtime salary threshold from its current level of $35,568 annually to $43,888 as of July 1, 2024, and then to $58,656 as of Jan. 1, 2025. This threshold will be automatically updated every three years thereafter. While most professors and adjunct faculty are not covered due to the Department's "teacher exemption," non-faculty staff earning less than the threshold must be paid on an hourly basis and will become eligible for overtime pay under the rule. More information can be found from the American Council on Education [10].

Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Highlights

Last month, Congress passed and President Biden signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (CAA, P.L. 118-42 [11]) and the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 (FCAA, P.L. 118-47 [12]), which provides fiscal year (FY) 2024 funding for all government agencies through September 30, 2024.

The bills adhere to funding caps enacted in the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA). As a result, budgets for most federal research programs were cut and most education and student aid programs were flat funded.

The bills include Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Funding, previously known as earmarks. CU received funding for three projects championed by members of the Colorado congressional delegation, including:

- $950,000 for a CU Boulder watershed quality monitoring project to mitigate wildfire and land-use impacts on Colorado's Yampa and Poudre Rivers – led by Rep. Neguse (CD-2)
- $402,785 for the CU Anschutz Rural eConsult Expansion Project – led by Rep. Crow (CD-6) and Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper.
- $374,000 for UCCS's Hybrid Physical Therapy Program – led by Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper.

More information and detailed funding on agencies impacting CU campuses can be found at the Fiscal Year 2024 Federal Appropriations Executive Summary [13].

House Education and Workforce Committee Holds Hearing on Antisemitism at Columbia University

On April 17, the House Education and Workforce Committee held a hearing on antisemitism at Columbia University. In the nearly four-hour hearing, Columbia President Minouche Shafik discussed actions the university has taken to address rising antisemitism on campus, as well as the university's efforts to balance free speech rights with disciplinary consequences for antisemitism. More information on the hearing can be found from *Reuters* [14].

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