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CU Federal Relations Update - 5.5.25 [1]

May 5, 2025 by Riley Black [2]

CU Federal Government Transition Updates Page

As a reminder, CU Federal Relations has created a Federal Government Transition Updates [3] page to provide access to communications and information regarding the ongoing federal transition, recent executive orders, and their ongoing implementation on the university's mission and the people who work and learn on our campuses.

CU Federal Relations Transition Update at Board of Regents Meeting

Danielle Radovich Piper, Senior Vice President for External Relations and Strategy, provided an update on the status of the federal transition and its impacts on CU at the CU Board of Regents meeting on April 11. More details are available at *CU Denver News* [4].

CU Submits Comments to Senate Appropriations Committee in Support of Biomedical Research

CU President Saliman and Chancellors Schwartz, Elliman, Sobanet and Christensen sent a letter [5] to the Senate Appropriations Committee regarding the April 30 hearing, "Biomedical Research: Keeping America's Edge in Innovation [6]". The letter highlighted the importance of biomedical research agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for Colorado and urged robust funding for these programs in Fiscal Year 2026. It also underscored the importance of the federal-university partnership in accelerating cures for patients across the country.

Reconciliation Update

The House Education and Workforce Committee released their reconciliation bill, the Student Success and Taxpayer Savings Plan [7], on April 28. The bill would decrease federal investment in education programs by $330 billion, with changes to Pell Grants, student loan repayment programs, and other federal student loan programs. The bill would also create a risk-sharing program that requires universities to reimburse the federal government for a percentage of the non-repayment balance of student loans disbursed starting July 2027. CU has advocated against these changes both in the current Congress and in the previous Congress, when the risk-sharing program was introduced. The bill was marked up on April 29, and advanced out of committee on a party-line vote of 21-14, with no amendments passing. APLU [8] and ACE [9] both wrote letters opposing the bill. More about the bill can be read at *Politico* [10]

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The House Armed Services Committee advanced [11] their reconciliation bill on April 29 on a 35-21 vote, with five Democrats voting favorably with Republicans. Other committees of importance such as Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means are expected to consider their bills later in May.

NSF Director Panchanathan Steps Down

National Science Foundation (NSF) director Sethuraman Panchanathan announced [12] his resignation from the agency, effective immediately, on April 24. His departure follows NSF's recent announcement [13] that it is freezing new awards and terminating active research grants related to diversity, equity and inclusion and misinformation. NSF Chief of Staff Brian Stone will serve as acting director until the President announces a replacement and the Senate confirms the appointee. More can be read in the April 25 Federal Government Update [14] from CU Federal Relations.

U.S. Department of Education Updates Regarding Federal Loans

The U.S. Department of Education announced [15] on April 21 that collections of defaulted federal student loans will resume on Monday, May 5. The Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) is urging borrowers in default to contact the Default Resolution Group [16] to make a monthly payment, enroll in an income-driven repayment plan, or sign up for loan rehabilitation. More information for borrowers in default can be found on the FSA website [17].

ED's Office of Postsecondary Education announced [18] on April 3 that it would begin negotiated rulemaking on Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 programs. The department is asking for public feedback on ways to improve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, Pay As you Earn (PAYE) repayment plan, and the Income-Contingent Repayment (ICR) plan. The comment period ends May 5.

Rep. Crow Visits CU Anschutz

Rep. Jason Crow (CO-6) visited CU Anschutz [19] on April 22, where he toured research labs and learned about the latest breakthroughs and the vital role federal funding plays in lifesaving medical discoveries. CU Anschutz Chancellor Don Elliman and Tom Flaig, Vice Chancellor of Research, hosted the visit. More about the visit can be read at *CPR News* [20].

U.S. Senate Staff Visit Quantum Information Teaching Lab at CU Denver

Staffers from the offices of Sens. Bennet and Hickenlooper visited CU Denver's Quantum Information Teaching Lab on April 30 to learn about quantum education opportunities at CU Denver.

CU Boulder, UCCS Receive NASA Grant for Autonomous Airspace Systems

CU Boulder was awarded [21] a NASA grant to research drone communications and aerial system concepts as part of the agency's University Leadership Initiative [22] (ULI). UCCS is

also a member of the research team, which has partners from around the country. More about the project can be read at *CU Boulder Today* [23].

Recent Capitol Hill Visits

Scott Adler, Dean of the CU Boulder Graduate School, met with staffers from the offices of Sen. Bennet and Rep. Neguse on April 23. He also met with congressional committee staff, including from Senate Ways and Means and the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committees as part of the Council on Graduate Schools advocacy day in DC.

Benét Duncan, Managing Director, and Ben Livneh, Director of the Western Water Assessment [24] (WWA) at CU Boulder met with staffers from the offices of Sen. Bennet, Rep. Neguse, and the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Commerce, Justice, and Science on April 9 and 10.

Rick George, Athletic Director at CU Boulder, met with [25] Reps. Neguse, Crank, and Evans on April 9.

CU Boulder PhD students participating in the AAAS CASE Workshop [26] met with staffers from the offices of Sens. Bennet, Hickenlooper, and Klobuchar (Minn.), and Rep. Neguse on April 9.

Vice Chancellors of Research Massimo Ruzzene, CU Boulder, and Tom Flaig, CU Anschutz, teamed up to meet with congressional staff about the importance of federally funded research at CU and research collaborations between the campuses. They met with [27] staffers from the offices of Reps. DeGette, Crank, Crow, and Pettersen on April 7.

Chris Hertel and Amrine Obermueller from the International Student and Scholar Services [28] (ISSS) met with Wyoming Sens. Barrasso and Lummis, Wyoming Rep. Hageman, and staffers from the offices of Sen. Bennet and Rep. Neguse on April 2 to discuss funding for international education and exchange programs. More about the visit can be read on the ISSS website [29].

Ted Scambos, Senior Research Scientist for Earth Science and Observation Center at CU Boulder's CIRES [30], the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences, was a featured panelist [31] at a congressional briefing on "The Importance of Antarctic Research and Infrastructure" to American research and national security on April 1. He also met with staffers from the offices of Sen. Hickenlooper, the Senate Appropriations Defense and Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittees, the House Science, Space, and Technology Subcommittee on Research and Technology, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mark Rentschler and Mark Borden, Professors of Mechanical Engineering at CU Boulder, met with staffers from the offices of Reps. Crank, Pettersen, and Evans on March 31 as part of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) Capitol Hill Day [32].

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[20] https://www.cpr.org/2025/04/23/colorado-health-care-brain-drain-rep-crow-visit/
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