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Federal Government Transition Update - 4.4.25 [1]

April 4, 2025 by Natalie Barry [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

Student Visas

Last week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced [3] the State Department has revoked more than 300 student and visitor visas. “I don’t know actually if it’s primarily student visas. It’s a combination of visas. They’re visitors to the country,” Secretary Rubio said. Nonimmigrant visa holders who participate in activities counter “to our national interest, to our foreign policy” and those with “active criminal charges” will have their visas revoked, he added. At least ten international students at Colorado universities have had their student visas revoked, reports [4] *The Colorado Sun*. CU issued a statement [5] confirming four of our international students from two campuses – Boulder and Colorado Springs – are directly impacted. NAFSA [6], the Association of International Educators, estimates [7] there are over 10,000 international students in Colorado, who contribute over $400 million to the economy and support nearly 4,000 jobs.

The Secretary of State also instructed consular officers on March 25 to “scrutinize the social media content” of student [8] and exchange visitor [9] visa applicants, reports [10] the *New York Times*. The Secretary’s directive says visas can be denied if applicants demonstrate “a hostile attitude toward U.S. citizens or U.S. culture.”

In addition, *Axios* reports [11] the administration is considering a new policy to prevent some colleges and universities from enrolling foreign students altogether. U.S. colleges and universities must be certified by the Department Homeland Security’s Student and Exchange Visitor Program [12] (SEVP) to admit international students. Nearly 7,500 colleges, language programs, and secondary schools have this certification [13], according to SEVP. The proposed policy would allow the government to decertify institutions from SEVP, if it determines too many foreign students on campus are “pro-Hamas.”

New Agency Priorities Announced

The President wrote a letter [14] to the newly confirmed Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy [15], Michael Kratsios, on March 26 tasking him with addressing priority science and technology challenges through the lens of three questions:

1. How can the U.S. secure its position as the unrivaled world leader in critical and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, quantum, and nuclear technology?

2. How can we revitalize America's science and technology enterprise - pursuing truth, reducing administrative burden, and empowering researchers to achieve groundbreaking discoveries?
3. How can we ensure that scientific progress and technological innovation fuel economic growth and better the lives of all Americans?

The letter highlights the American Artificial Intelligence Initiative, National Quantum Initiative, and creation of the U.S. Space Force as science and technology achievements from the President's first term.

On April 1, Jay Bhattacharya, MD, the new [16] Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), sent a dear colleague letter to NIH employees announcing his priorities for the agency. Specifically, Dr. Bhattacharya outlined five topic areas:

1. Improve population health with a focus on chronic disease;
2. Prioritize research that is rigorous, reproducible, and unbiased;
3. Embrace new technologies, ideas and approaches to old problems to increase innovation and collaboration;
4. Ensure all experiments are transparent, pose no risk of harm to human populations, and meet the highest ethical standards; and
5. Foster academic freedom and encourage thinking that diverges from the scientific consensus.

States File Lawsuit on Recission of COVID Funds

On April 1, a coalition of 23 states including Colorado filed a lawsuit [17] in Rhode Island regarding the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) decision to rescind $11 billion in public health funding for COVID-19 initiatives. According to the lawsuit, HHS terminated over $200 million in awards for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and Colorado Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) to address COVID-19 testing and behavioral health services. On April 3, the court put a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the cancelation of these grants.

States File Lawsuit on NIH Grant Disruptions and Terminations

On April 4, Colorado joined a coalition of 16 states in suing the federal administration in the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts alleging unlawful disruption to NIH grant funding. Specifically, the lawsuit challenges the recent delays in reviewing NIH grant applications, as well as termination of grants. The states are also asking the court to grant a TRO that would restore terminated NIH grants and prevent further termination while the lawsuit proceeds.

Supreme Court Allows Administration to Cancel Teaching Grants

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court granted the federal administration's request to terminate $65 million in Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) and Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grants while the lawsuit plays out in a lower court. The grants, which support teacher development, were cancelled by the U.S. Department of Education in February. Eight states, including Colorado, filed a lawsuit to restore the grants in their states.

We recognize the challenges and uncertainty on our campuses during this time of change at the national level. We assure you the Federal Relations and General Counsel teams are

monitoring developments to keep you informed. We appreciate all that you do and will continue to do for CU, and together we will navigate these changes. Please know we are here for you, and we are working closely with the President and Chancellors as well as the Colorado congressional delegation. We encourage you to contact your campus leadership with questions. Please visit the CU System Federal Transitions Update [18] page for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

Kerry Tipper, Vice President, University Counsel??

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