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Federal Government Update - 4.3.26 [1]

April 3, 2026 by Riley Black [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

FY26 Government Funding Update
The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) remains unfunded, as Congress has not yet passed FY26 funding for the department. Funding lapsed on February 14. The Senate, on April 2, re-sent their legislation to the House to fund nearly all of DHS through the end of this fiscal year, which ends on September 30. The current legislation would fund the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Coast Guard. It does not include funding for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and part of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Speaker Johnson signaled support for the legislation, but the House in a brief ceremonial session on April 2 did not take up the legislation, reports [3] the *New York Times*. The House, which is on recess through April 13, does not at this time plan to return early.

The President signed an executive action [4] on March 27, directing the Secretary of DHS to work with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to use funds to pay TSA workers, who have been unpaid during this time. TSA workers began receiving missed paychecks on March 30, relieving financial strain and TSA airport security lines, reports [5] the *New York Times*. Additionally, the President announced [6] on April 2, he will sign an executive action to direct that all DHS employees receive paychecks during the ongoing lapse in funding, reports [7] *Axios*.

FY27 President's Budget Request
The White House released [8] the President's Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Discretionary Budget Request (PBR) to Congress today. The request offers details on the administration's funding priorities for the next fiscal year, which begins on October 1. The PBR proposes $1.5 trillion in defense funding, a 40 percent increase, and reductions to all non-defense programs by 10 percent or about $73 billion. These reductions assume the shifting of some budgetary responsibilities to the states and local governments. We will send an analysis of the PBR once we are able to review it further.

The PBR does not have the force of law. It is the first step in the federal appropriations process, in which Congress has final say on federal spending under Article I of the Constitution. In the coming months, lawmakers will write appropriations bills, convene public hearings and cast votes on the 12 annual funding bills. Notably, federal funding bills are subject to the Senate's 60-vote threshold and require bipartisan support to become law, unlike budget reconciliation which requires a simple majority. In FY26, the President's Budget

Proposal sought to eliminate and decrease funding for various programs including in the areas of health, science and education. These proposed cuts were rejected by Congress. CU is actively participating in this process in FY27, championing our funding priorities with the Colorado congressional delegation, urging members to sign funding support letters, and meeting with appropriations committee staff among other advocacy.

New Executive Orders

The White House issued an Executive Order (EO) entitled *Ensuring Citizenship Verification and Integrity in Federal Elections* [9] on March 31. The EO instructs the federal government to compile lists, to be known as 'State Citizenship Lists', of eligible voters and send the lists to each state sixty days prior to an election. The EO also instructs the United States Postal Service to only send mail ballots to verified voters and adds additional requirements for the use of mail-in voting. Details are covered in a fact sheet [10] released with the order. Senate Minority Leader Schumer along with House Minority Leader Jeffries joined a lawsuit with the Democratic National Committee, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Democratic Governors Association to challenge the administration's authority to implement the EO, reports [11] *Politico*.

The White House issued an EO entitled *Addressing DEI Discrimination by Federal Contractors* [12] on March 26. The EO directs federal agencies to ensure that all federal contractors and subcontractors "will not engage in any racially discriminatory DEI activities," including disparate treatment based on race or ethnicity in the recruitment, employment (hiring, promotions), vendor agreements, program participation, or allocation or deployment of resources. Penalties for violations include suspension and debarment, cancellations of contracts and False Claims Act liability. Here is the fact sheet [13] released with the order.

HHS and CMS Introduce New Healthcare Advisory Committee

On March 26, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced [14] the formation of a new advisory committee to recommend "ways to improve how care is financed and delivered" across Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance, reports [15] *The Hill*. The 18 committee members include healthcare executives, health policy attorneys, academics and physicians.

ED & DOE Announce Headquarters Moves

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) announced on March 26, it would vacate its headquarters building in Washington, D.C., which is 70 percent vacant due to reduced staff working in the building. ED will move to a smaller building a few blocks away and the Department of Energy (DOE) will move from its headquarters to the current ED building, with a targeted move date of August 2026.

Federal Judge Extends Deadline for IPEDs Data for More Colleges
A federal judge announced on March 31 he was not ready to rule on a preliminary injunction for the 17 states, including Colorado, who joined the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) case. At issue is the new requirement that universities must submit admissions data on race, gender and standardized test scores to the U.S. Department of Education. The judge also withheld a ruling on whether to allow a motion to intervene by the Association of American Universities (AAU) and Association of Independent Colleges (AIC). This judge has issued [16] a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) delaying data submissions by universities in the intervening states until April 14. The hearing for the preliminary injunction is set for April 13, reports [17] *Higher Ed Dive*.

The Federal Relations and General Counsel teams are actively monitoring developments at the federal level. We are working closely with the President and Chancellors, as well as the Colorado congressional delegation to champion CU priorities. We are committed to keeping you informed. Please visit the CU System Federal Updates and Actions [18] page for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

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