Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

Federal Government Update - 5.1.26 [1]

May 1, 2026 by Riley Black [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

DHS Shutdown Ends, House Passes Budget Resolution
The president signed [3] legislation into law that funds most of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through Sept. 30, 2026, ending the 76-day DHS shutdown. The legislation [4], which passed the House by voice vote [5] on April 30 and the Senate by voice vote [4] on March 27, funds all of DHS except for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

The House also advanced a budget resolution [6] this week with a party-line vote of 215-211 [7]. The resolution directs congressional committees to draft legislation to provide roughly $70 billion over the next three years for immigration enforcement operations. The Senate passed the resolution on April 23.

The budget resolution is the first step in the budget reconciliation process, which will enable Republicans to pass major fiscal legislation this year by a simple majority, bypassing the Senate's 60-vote filibuster and the need for bipartisan support. This resolution focuses on ICE and CBP, which are not currently funded.

White House Dismisses National Science Board
The White House dismissed the National Science Board (NSB) on April 24. The NSB is an independent body of 25 advisors from academia and industry that oversee the National Science Foundation (NSF), including approval of new NSF programs and awards, and advise the president and Congress on national science policy. Members are appointed by the president and serve staggered six-year terms. The White House said it fired the board because the NSB should be confirmed by the Senate, reports [8] *Inside Higher Ed*. It is unclear whether the White House will appoint new NSB members if Congress does not change the statute. Currently, NSF does not have a director, deputy director or board. The White House nominated [9] venture capitalist Jim O'Neill as NSF director in March. Several national higher education associations released statements on the firings: APLU statement [10], AAU statement [11].

ED Finalizes Rule Implementing Graduate and Professional Degree Loan Limits
The U.S. Department of Education (ED) finalized [12] its rule regarding student loan limits for graduate and professional students on May 1. The rule is the result of negotiated rulemaking by the Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee and implements student loan changes required by H.R. 1, the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*.

The rule, which is effective July 1, eliminates Grad PLUS loans, caps Parent PLUS loans, creates a new Repayment Assistance Plan and restricts lifetime borrowing to $100,000 for graduate students and $200,000 for professional students. The rule also clarifies that all borrowers who receive a federal loan on or after July 1, 2026 are subject to an aggregate loan limit of $257,500 and that Grad PLUS loans are *included* in the new lifetime limit. ED previously said Grad PLUS loans would not apply. Moreover, the regulations designate 11 programs as "professional" degrees, including Medicine (MD and DO), Pharmacy (PharmD), Dentistry (DDS or DMD), Optometry (OD), and Law (LLB or JD). For more information, here's ED's fact sheet [13]on the new rule.

CU Anschutz [14], Boulder [15], Colorado Springs, [16] and Denver [17] submitted comments on the proposed regulations earlier this year, which highlight the impact the new student loan caps will have on our campuses. APLU issued this statement [18] on the new rule.

White House Issues New Federal Contracting Executive Order

The White House issued a new executive order [19] on April 30 entitled, *Promoting Efficiency, Accountability, and Performance in Federal Contracting*. The order directs federal agencies to maximize use of fixed-price and performance-based contracts in lieu of cost-reimbursement contracts. Federal agencies are directed to modify, restructure or renegotiate their ten largest non-fixed price contracts within 90 days to incorporate fixed-price and performance-based metrics. Agencies are also now required to report to the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) semi-annually on the number, value and justification for any non-fixed price contracts. OMB will issue guidance to federal agencies within 45 days on how to implement the order. Amendments to the Federal Acquisition Regulation to implement the policy will be announced within 120 days. Here's a fact sheet [20] with more information on the new policy.

ED Launches New FAFSA Fraud Prevention Capability

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) launched [21] on April 27 a new fraud detection capability for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). ED says fraud detection is now built directly into the FAFSA and each applicant will be evaluated in real-time with risk-based identity screening. Applicants who demonstrate fraud risk will be required to present government identification before accessing federal student aid or loans. ED is also screening previously submitted 2026-27 FAFSA forms. This update was made to enhance student aid fraud protections implemented [22] by the administration in 2025.

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 [23] and Actions page for up-to-date communications and federal memos.

Danielle Radovich Piper, Sr. VP External Relations and Strategy
Kerry Tipper, Vice President, University Counsel

Federal Weekly Updates [24]
Send email when Published:
No

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-5126

Links

[1] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/federal-government-update-5126
[2] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/author/167081 [3] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2026/04/congressional-bill-h-r-7147-signed-into-law/
[4] https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/7147/all-actions?s=1&r=1&hl=H.R.+7147 [5] https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/volume-172/issue-76/house-section/article/H3311-7 [6] https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-concurrent-resolution/33 [7] https://www.congress.gov/votes/house/119-2/143
[8] https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/science-research-policy/2026/04/27/board-ouster-raises-further-concerns-about-nsfs?utm_source=Inside+Higher+Ed&utm_campaign=4cbc6f4767-DNU_2021_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1fcbc04421-4cbc6f4767-236595722&mc_cid=4cbc6f4767&mc_eid=b0b5b086f8 [9] https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/03/nominations-sent-to-the-senate-4e42/
[10] https://www.aplu.org/news-and-media/news/aplu-statement-on-dismissal-of-national-science-board-members/ [11] https://www.aau.edu/newsroom/press-releases/administrations-dismissal-national-science-board [12] https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2026-08556/reimagining-and-improving-student-education-federal-student-loan-program [13] https://www.ed.gov/media/document/rise-final-rule-fact-sheet-113947.pdf [14] https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2025-OPE-0944-13894
[15] https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2025-OPE-0944-18141
[16] https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2025-OPE-0944-17304
[17] https://www.regulations.gov/comment/ED-2025-OPE-0944-18159 [18] https://www.aplu.org/news-and-media/news/aplu-statement-on-final-graduate-student-loan-limits/ [19] https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/04/promoting-efficiency-accountability-and-performance-in-federal-contracting/ [20] https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2026/04/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-promotes-efficiency-accountability-and-performance-in-federal-contracting/
[21] https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-launches-comprehensive-nationwide-federal-student-aid-fraud-prevention-effort [22] https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-implement-new-identity-validation-processes-combat-student-aid-fraud [23] https://www.cu.edu/office-government-relations/federal-relations/federal-updates-and-actions
[24] https://www.cu.edu/blog/government-relations/tag/federal-weekly-updates