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Federal Government Update - 6.5.26 [1]

June 5, 2026 by Natalie Barry [2]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find a federal government update from our teams.

NCAR Dismantling Blocked by Federal Court
A federal judge issued a preliminary injunction [3] on June 1 that temporarily blocks the federal government's efforts to restructure the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) headquartered in Boulder, CO. The University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), which manages NCAR for the National Science Foundation (NSF), filed the lawsuit [4] in March. The injunction pauses NSF's efforts to transition management of the NCAR-Wyoming Supercomputing Center from UCAR to a third party-operator, a move announced [5] by NSF in February.

The injunction is not a final ruling, but the court said the case is likely to succeed on its merits, reports [6] *CPR*. The judge ruled the federal government acted illegally because (1) it failed to articulate any rationale or "identify any deficiencies or concerns" regarding UCAR's operation of the supercomputing facility, and (2) it "did not follow its own announced decision-making process" when it decided to transfer stewardship of the facility before considering public feedback solicited through a dear colleague letter [7], which closed in March. It is unclear whether NSF will appeal the injunction.

White House Issues AI Executive Order
The White House issued an executive order [8] on June 2 entitled *Promoting Advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) Innovation and Security*. The order directs the Departments of War and Homeland Security to coordinate with the White House Office of Management and Budget to prioritize the cyber defense of the federal government's IT systems through enhanced AI-enabled defense tools and creation of an AI cybersecurity clearinghouse, in which AI industry will voluntarily submit their models for testing and remediation before public release. The order also directs the National Cyber Director and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to work together to determine whether grant programs can be directed to advanced AI vulnerability detection. Here's a fact sheet [9] with details on the new policy.

NSF Reverses University Funding Freeze

The National Science Foundation (NSF) reversed, on May 28, a funding freeze on new research grants to Duke, Harvard and Yale, reports [10] *Inside Higher Ed*. The freeze was implemented at NSF on April 9, says *Nature*, which first reported [11] on the policy. The funding freeze remains in effect for Princeton. NSF did not cite a reason for the reversal, which came one day after public reports on the policy. Funding is once again flowing to the three affected universities.

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

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