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Proposed Federal Budget Cuts Threaten the Future of Cancer Research

On Friday, May 30, President Donald J. Trump released his final budget proposal for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, slashing the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) budget by 25.2 percent overall, and cutting funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) by 40.4 percent and 37.2 percent, respectively. The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) firmly believes these drastic budget cuts will have devastating consequences for millions of Americans.

In the HHS "[budget in brief](#)," the Trump administration highlights the importance of sustaining global competitiveness and promoting "gold standard" science. However, the cumulative damage of [budget cuts](#), a [15 percent cap on indirect cost rates](#), [reductions in force](#), terminated contracts, and delayed and canceled grants across the NIH and NCI will diminish our global reputation and stifle scientific progress.

Since the passage of the National Cancer Act in 1971, Congress has demonstrated strong bipartisan support for cancer research through federal investments in the NIH and NCI. Americans have seen significant returns on these investments, including a [34-percent reduction in deaths from cancer](#) between 1991 and 2022, and [18 million more Americans alive today](#) due to advances in cancer screening, prevention, and care. Despite these strides, cancer remains a formidable challenge in the U.S., with the incidence of many cancers on the rise. If the administration continues its reckless trajectory, our country will lose decades of progress and stall future breakthroughs that could mean the difference between life and death for people with cancer.

"For over 50 years, our country's investments in cancer research have driven discoveries that become tomorrow's cures," said AACI Executive Director **Jennifer W. Pegher**. "Federally funded cancer research has saved and extended the lives of millions of Americans. We cannot lose momentum now, when so many lives are still at risk."

[AACI urges Congress to reject the FY 2026 budget proposal](#) and protect the institutions that make the U.S. a global leader in biomedical research. We call on the Trump administration to renew our country's longstanding commitment to cancer research through continued investment in the NIH and NCI.

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AACI's mission is to accelerate progress against cancer by enhancing the impact of North America's leading academic cancer centers and promoting cancer health equity. For more information, please visit aacr.org.