

## PPC Update

May 13, 2025

**TRUMP ADMINISTRATION RELEASES SKINNY BUDGET.** On May 2, President Trump [unveiled a budget blueprint](#), also known as a “skinny budget,” that proposes a \$163 billion cut in federal spending on non-defense programs for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. Of note, the President’s budget is a nonbinding document that does not directly impact the funding of federal agencies, and Congress will determine how much money to allocate to each component of the federal government in annual appropriations legislation.

The budget calls for a 26.2% cut to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Within HHS, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) would receive the largest cut; the skinny budget proposed nearly \$18 billion in cuts to the NIH and proposes shrinking the number of institutes and centers from its current 27 to only 8. [Previous NIH restructuring plans by Republican lawmakers proposed reducing the number of institutes to 15](#), but this latest proposal by the administration goes much further. While a [leaked preliminary budget document](#) from late April indicates that the *Eunice Shriver Kennedy* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) would be folded into a new institute focused on disability-related research, the official skinny budget does not contain that level of detail, and more information on the administration’s proposal for the future of NICHD is expected when the remainder of the President’s budget for FY26 is released in the coming weeks. The draft budget memo would also have Congress make permanent a controversial plan to cap NIH indirect cost rates at 15%. The administration’s earlier attempt to reduce indirect costs unilaterally remains on hold as [ongoing legal challenges](#) move forward; in an attempt to sidestep future legal challenges, the budget also proposes eliminating the general provision in the appropriations bill that prohibits changes to NIH indirect cost policies.

The skinny budget also folds the functions of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) into an Office of Strategy that would be housed within AHA. The proposed budget also calls for eliminating AHRQ’s digital health portfolio, ending new research grants, and offloading contracts and interagency agreements not associated with “statistical activities.” And it makes no mention of currently administered AHRQ research grants and whether they will continue.

As for other HHS agencies that administer critical health workforce and public health programs, the skinny budget proposes the consolidation of several programs formerly administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), representing a funding decrease of \$1.732 billion. Funding for a number of HRSA programs would be eliminated under this budgetary framework, including a number of health workforce programs and programs supporting maternal and child health. It is worth noting that the leaked budget memo referenced the creation of a brand-new Administration for Healthy America (AHA), which would combine HRSA with several other HHS agencies. Several crucial HRSA programs supporting children and families would potentially face either elimination or programmatic changes under this proposal. Furthermore, the budget would cut funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by roughly \$3.58 million, from its current \$9.2 billion to \$5.6 billion. It [proposes eliminating several noninfectious disease initiatives within the agency](#), including the

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

While this request is only a proposal as noted above, it is a reflection of President Trump's FY 2026 budget priorities for HHS and could influence the funding legislation passed by Congress. A more comprehensive budgetary proposal is expected to be unveiled on May 19.

**SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING HIGHLIGHTS CONCERNS ON FUTURE OF BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH.** On April 30, the US Senate Appropriations Committee held a bipartisan hearing entitled [“Biomedical Research: Keeping America’s Edge in Innovation.”](#) The hearing provided an opportunity to discuss the importance of federal investment in biomedical research and development.

Panelists highlighted how research funded by the NIH has made significant strides toward improving the health of all Americans, including children and families. Witnesses also voiced concern regarding the president's then-leaked budget proposal, which included a roughly 40% funding reduction to NIH. Witnesses emphasized the value of NIH research funding, and the dire consequences the administration's proposed funding cuts would have on the future of health research should they take effect. Emily Stenson, a parent advocate and mother of a four-year old cancer survivor, gave powerful [testimony](#) about how federal funding for pediatric cancer research and access to clinical trials saved her daughter's life.

Throughout the hearing, there was broad bipartisan support for federal investments in biomedical research, including child health research. Witnesses and members of the committee expressed concern regarding NIH's decision to cut indirect cost rates. Senate Appropriations Chair Susan Collins (R-Ma.) was notably very opposed to the Trump administration's actions cutting research funding at NIH, including the 15% cap on indirect rates and recent workforce reductions, and [publicly demanded the cuts be reversed immediately](#). Collins had also called out the administration's attempt to cap indirect costs as directly contrary to language in appropriations laws.

— **Advocacy Opportunity.** It is vital that lawmakers hear from academic pediatricians about how cuts to health research and mass reductions in federal staff are impacting the work of pediatric researchers. If you are experiencing direct impacts on the ground from the recent cuts to public health research or layoffs of federal staff, **you should contact your members of Congress to tell them about how it's impacting you and your work.**

**Here's how to contact your members of Congress:**

- **By Phone:** You can call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to be connected to your representative's office and ask to speak with the health staff. You also can find your U.S. representative by going to [House.gov](https://www.house.gov) and using the "Find Your Representative" feature at the top right of the page. To find your U.S. senators, visit [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) and use the "Find Your Senators" feature at the top left of the page. The contact information for their Washington, DC, office is available on their websites.
- **By Email:** You can also send emails to your members of Congress using the contact form on their websites, using the discussion guidance below as a template.

**Discussion guidance**

- Hello. My name is **{First and last name}** from **{City, State}**. I am an academic pediatrician specializing in **{insert your area of research expertise e.g., pediatric endocrinology, etc.}**.
- I am calling today to share how the recently announced funding cuts and reductions to the Department of Health and Human Services are affecting my work and the broad impact of these cuts on pediatric research.
- *[Share a specific example of how your research or work has been impacted by these cuts]*
- *[Share a specific example of how your research or work has contributed to improved child health care and outcomes]*
- I am urging **{Representative/Senator's Name}** to consider the importance of federal investment in pediatric research as Congress negotiates the fiscal year 2026 budget.
- Thank you for your time.