

Future Cancer Cures in Jeopardy as Trump Proposes Massive Cuts to National Cancer Institute

Cuts could cost United States its global competitive edge in biomedical research, turning back clock on years of progress.

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WASHINGTON, DC — [On May 30], the president released his final proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 which contains \$4.531 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI). This represents a cut of almost \$2.7 billion, or approximately 37.2%, from the current fiscal year.

The following is a statement from the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN):

“For the past 50 years, every significant medical breakthrough, especially in the treatment of cancer, has been linked to sustained federal investment in research at NIH [National Institutes of Health] and NCI. This commitment has contributed to the remarkable statistic of over 18 million cancer survivors currently living in the U.S. today. Furthermore, NCI-supported clinical trials implemented between 1980 and 2020 were estimated to have added 14.2 million additional life-years to patients with cancer. Moving backwards in funding would not only stall scientific breakthroughs but also impact our ability to combat the rising incidence of cancer nationwide. Cuts have consequences, and those consequences are life threatening for cancer patients who could be waiting for the next clinical trial or research breakthrough.

“This proposal slashes the NIH budget, and in some cases completely eliminates funding for groundbreaking research initiatives, public health programs and essential support systems that have contributed to advancements in cancer prevention, early detection and more effective treatment options. Returning to funding levels from two decades ago — and three decades ago when accounting for biomedical inflation — will set this nation back dramatically in our ability to reduce death and suffering from a disease that is expected to kill more than 618,000 Americans this year alone.

“The Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) housed at the CDC has been instrumental in cancer prevention and detection, including providing over 16.3 million screening exams to more than 6.3 million eligible people through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, as well as funding over 50 state and regional cancer registries. These cuts pose a major

threat to the ongoing fight against cancer, especially for research, prevention and screening services.

“Registries also funded by the DCPC have helped us understand our progress against cancer, alerted us to concerning trends and helped policymakers direct resources as needed. Without these registries, further progress against cancer is at risk. If implemented, these cuts will deal a devastating blow to cancer patients and their families, and the United States could lose its global competitive edge in biomedical research.

“ACS CAN calls on the president to reverse course and protect the programs and services at HHS that have made our country a global leader in cancer research. Additionally, it is crucial that Congress comes together in a bipartisan manner to reject these proposed cuts and instead protect and enhance funding for cancer research, prevention and data collection. This is not a partisan issue. Cancer affects individuals and families across the political spectrum and across the country, so both parties have a shared responsibility as we battle this disease. These proposed cuts will lead to more suffering and death from cancer, reversing course on the downward trend in cancer death rates.”

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