

Trump's Proposed 26.2% Cut to Health Department Budget Devastating to Fight Against Cancer

Proposed FY2026 budget slashes the National Institutes of Health by 37% and eliminates CDC's cancer screening and prevention programs.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – [On May 2, 2025], the president released his proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026 which contains a 26.2% cut to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This includes a 37% cut to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and eliminates the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The following is a statement from Lisa Lacasse, president of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN):

“The 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.

“For the past 50 years, every significant medical breakthrough, especially in the treatment of cancer, has been linked to sustained federal investment in research. This commitment has contributed to the remarkable statistic of over 18 million cancer survivors currently living in the U.S. today. Moving backwards in funding would not only stall scientific breakthroughs but also impact our ability to combat the rising incidence of cancer nationwide. With more than 2 million people in America expected to be diagnosed with cancer this year, now is the time to strengthen, not weaken, our commitment to ending cancer as we know it, for everyone.

“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. If these registries are not moved to another department or funded through other means, it will cripple our ability to make further progress against cancer. 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 protect and enhance funding for cancer research. 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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