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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG Kaul Sues Trump Administration Over Illegal Funding Cuts and Delays for Medical and Public Health Research

MADISON, Wis. – Attorney General Josh Kaul today joined a coalition of 16 attorneys general in suing the Trump administration in the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts over its unlawful attempt to disrupt grant funding issued by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The [lawsuit](#) challenges the administration’s unreasonable and intentional delays in reviewing NIH grant applications, as well as its termination of hundreds of already-issued grants.

“The actions of the Trump administration are sabotaging medical and public health research,” said AG Kaul. “The administration must return to complying with the law so this work that’s critical to people’s health stops being improperly delayed.”

As a result of the Administration’s actions, the states allege that their public research institutions have experienced significant harm. For example, UW-Madison, which receives over \$404 million annually from NIH, has lost four grants worth \$25 million, impacting research on infectious disease, vaccines, and minority health. UW-Milwaukee lost two grants supporting substance abuse and violence prevention research.

Beyond funding cuts, delays in NIH grant processing threaten research continuity and hinder student training. The loss of a major NIH grant alone could cut ten research positions and disrupt the academic progress of approximately 40 students. These actions not only threaten Wisconsin’s scientific workforce but also deprive the state and broader community of critical medical and public health research.

Typically, NIH grant applications must undergo two layers of review: review by a “study section” of subject-matter experts who assess the scientific merit of the proposal and review by an advisory council that considers funding availability and agency priorities. Since January, the Administration has cancelled upcoming meetings for both of these review bodies and has delayed the scheduling of future meetings. Further, NIH has indefinitely withheld issuing final decisions on applications that have already received approval from the relevant study section and advisory council. Currently, the plaintiff states are awaiting decisions on billions of dollars in requested research funding.

The coalition argues that by postponing meetings, delaying the review of pending applications, failing to issue final recommendations, and terminating issued grants, NIH is failing to meet its statutory obligations and violating applicable regulations. Further, the coalition argues that the Administration does not have the authority to unilaterally decline spending congressionally appropriated funds.

The coalition is asking the Court to compel the Administration to promptly review and issue decisions on delayed grant applications and prohibit them from terminating already-awarded grants.

On February 10, AG Kaul joined a coalition of 22 attorneys general in [filing a lawsuit](#) against the Administration for its attempts to unilaterally cut “indirect cost” reimbursements for NIH grants at nearly every research institution in the country. On March 5, a federal judge [issued a preliminary injunction](#) against the Administration, preventing it from cutting the funding as the case proceeds.

Joining AG Kaul in filing today’s lawsuit, which was led by the Attorneys General of Massachusetts, California, Maryland, and Washington, were the attorneys general of Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and Rhode Island.