

Protect Merit-Based NIH Research

Member script for immediate outreach before the proposed executive order is issued

STATUS: Reports indicate that the White House is considering an executive order that could establish a politically appointed oversight panel with authority to review individual grants issued by the National Institutes of Health.

The ask

Ask your members of Congress to contact the White House now and urge the administration not to issue an executive order or take other action that would subject individual NIH grant awards to approval or veto by a politically appointed panel.

Before you call

- Call your U.S. representative and both U.S. senators. Ask for the staff member who handles health, biomedical research, or appropriations.
- If possible, add one sentence about how NIH-supported research affects patients, families, researchers, clinicians, or institutions in your state or district.

Suggested call script

Hello, my name is [NAME], and I live in [CITY/STATE or ZIP CODE]. I am a constituent and a member of the Gerontological Society of America.

I am calling about reports that the White House is considering an executive order that could establish a politically appointed panel to review and potentially veto individual National Institutes of Health grant awards.

I urge [SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE NAME] to contact the White House now, before any executive order is issued, and ask the administration not to move forward with a proposal that would override NIH's established scientific and merit-based review process.

Decisions about lifesaving research should be guided by scientific merit and the potential to improve health, not by political tests. An additional grant-by-grant approval process could delay promising research and progress toward treatments and cures for conditions including cancer, Alzheimer's disease, and heart disease.

Please use Congress's oversight and appropriations authority to protect a transparent, expert-led NIH grantmaking process and the research patients and families are counting on.

Will [SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE NAME] contact the White House now and urge the administration not to issue this proposed executive order? I would appreciate a written response explaining what the member will do. Thank you for your time.

After your call: Please let GSA know if you receive any follow-up from your member of Congress or congressional staff.

If staff asks for more information

- The proposal has been reported publicly, but the executive order has not been published. GSA is concerned about any approach that would permit political review of individual NIH awards after scientific review.
- The concern is not about a party or candidate. It is about preserving scientific merit review, congressional intent, timely research, and accountability to patients and the public.
- Ask the office to share its position and any action it takes with you in writing.