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Attorney General Brown Sues Trump Administration to Protect Scientific Research and Education Programs *Lawsuit Defends National Science Foundation Funds and Efforts to Increase Diversity in STEM*

BALTIMORE, MD (May 28, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined a coalition of 15 other attorneys general in suing the Trump administration to stop its illegal attempts to cut critical National Science Foundation (NSF) programs and funding that help maintain the United States’ position as a global leader in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

On April 18, NSF began terminating projects focused on increasing the participation of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in STEM fields. On May 2, NSF announced that it would also cap “indirect costs” of research projects like laboratory space, equipment, and facility services at 15 percent that would slash millions of dollars for groundbreaking scientific research across the country. With this [lawsuit](#), Attorney General Brown and the coalition are seeking a court order blocking the implementation of NSF’s new directives to eliminate programs addressing diversity in STEM and cut vital funding for research across the country.

“The Trump administration is unlawfully terminating millions in science funding from Maryland universities like Bowie State and UMBC, eliminating opportunities for students from historically marginalized communities to get well-paying jobs in STEM fields,” **said Attorney General Brown**. “We’re taking legal action to stop these devastating cuts so our universities can continue to train the next generation of scientists and engineers who will strengthen our economy, protect public health, and produce groundbreaking research.”

Since its creation in 1950, NSF has been an independent federal agency crucial to maintaining the United States’ dominance in STEM. From developing artificial intelligence (AI) technology to creating innovative solutions to environmental and energy challenges, NSF-funded research at American universities is vital to addressing the nation’s biggest challenges and maintaining the country’s competitive edge.

NSF also has a Congressionally-mandated focus on improving diversity in STEM fields. Congress has instructed in law that a “core strategy” of NSF’s work must be to increase the

participation of people who have historically been left out of STEM occupations. This policy has been a success. As the coalition of attorneys general notes, between 1995 and 2017, the number of women in science and engineering occupations, or with science or engineering degrees, has doubled. During that same time, people of color went from 15 percent to 35 percent of science and engineering job or degree holders. As a result of NSF's April 18 directive to terminate programs seeking to increase diversity in STEM, dozens of projects have been canceled.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition also assert in the lawsuit that NSF's directive to cap indirect costs at 15 percent would devastate scientific research at universities throughout the country. NSF's new cap would mean essential research and infrastructure would be cut, leading to critical projects being abandoned, staff laid off, and research essential to national security, public health, and economic stability ending. The administration's unlawful attempts to cap indirect costs at 15 percent for National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Department of Energy (DOE) grants have already been stopped by courts, in part due to a lawsuit brought by Attorney General Brown and 21 other attorneys general.

Maryland's universities are already feeling the devastating effects of these cuts. For example, the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) has lost \$4.846 million across seven terminated NSF programs that supported graduate and undergraduate fellowships, faculty diversification, and critical STEM education research. Likewise, Bowie State University has also seen three major programs terminated, including projects that helped address the underrepresentation of Black males in STEM teaching careers and supported graduate student pathways. These terminations will significantly reduce the pipeline of qualified STEM teachers and researchers in Maryland, particularly affecting the state's ability to serve first-generation students, inner-city youth, and communities that have historically been underrepresented in STEM fields.

Attorney General Brown and the coalition argue that NSF's directives violate the Administrative Procedure Act and the Constitution by unlawfully changing NSF policy and ignoring Congress's intent for how NSF should function. The lawsuit seeks a court order ruling NSF's new policies are illegal and blocking them from being implemented.

Joining Attorney General Brown in filing this lawsuit are the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin.

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