



SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CCP DEMOCRATS | RANKING MEMBER RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHI

November 5, 2025

The Honorable Russell T. Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Vought,

I am writing to express my deep concern over the Trump Administration's proposed and enacted cuts to America's scientific and research institutions, which threaten to undermine our nation's long-term competitiveness with the People's Republic of China (PRC). While the United States is dismantling the very foundations that have sustained our STEM and innovation leadership for generations, Beijing has announced its plans to continue accelerating its investments in science, technology, and innovation.

Under your leadership, 2026 federal funding for basic scientific research would drop from \$45 billion to \$30 billion, a decline of about 34 percent.¹ Overall science funding, including basic, applied, and developmental research as well as R&D facilities, would fall from \$198 billion to \$154 billion, a 22 percent decrease.² According to Toby Smith of the Association of American Universities these funding cuts "would essentially end America's longstanding role as the world leader in science and innovation."³

Under your direction, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) have proposed or encouraged drastic reductions in federal research and development funding that would hollow out America's scientific capacity. These proposals include a 57 percent reduction in the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget, a 47 percent cut to NASA's science research budget, and a 39 percent reduction in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget compared to current-year funding.⁴ Alongside these cuts OMB has overseen firings, induced resignations or forced retirements for over 12,000 employees at STEM and R&D agencies, with NASA (3,870 employees), the Federal Drug Administration (3,500), the Center for Disease Control (3,000), NIH (1,200), and the NSF (600) among the most devastated.⁵ With the recent wave of RIFs you are personally overseeing, this loss of talent to the federal government is only getting worse. But ultimately, it is the American people who will suffer the consequences.

In fact, every dollar of U.S. federal R&D investment into public R&D returns between \$1.40 and \$2.10 in economic output, creating jobs, building companies, and fueling innovation that keeps the U.S. economy the leader of the

¹ William J. Broad. "Trump Seeks to Cut Basic Scientific Research by Roughly One-Third, Report Shows." *NYTimes*. July 10, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/10/science/trump-science-budget-cuts.html>

² William J. Broad. "Trump Seeks to Cut Basic Scientific Research by Roughly One-Third, Report Shows." *NYTimes*. July 10, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/10/science/trump-science-budget-cuts.html>

³ William J. Broad. "Trump Seeks to Cut Basic Scientific Research by Roughly One-Third, Report Shows." *NYTimes*. July 10, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/10/science/trump-science-budget-cuts.html>

⁴ Alan Burdick. "Has Your Scientific Work Been Cut? We Want to Hear." *NYTimes*. October 8, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/08/climate/trump-climate-science-funding.html>.

⁵ Alan Burdick. "Has Your Scientific Work Been Cut? We Want to Hear." *NYTimes*. October 8, 2025. <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/08/climate/trump-climate-science-funding.html>; Chandelis Duster. "Nearly 4,000 NASA employees opt to leave agency through deferred resignation program." *National Public Radio*. July 26, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/07/26/nx-s1-5481304/nasa-employees-deferred-resignation-program>; Eric Katz and David DiMolfetta. "NSF slashes most career executive roles after shedding one-third of staff." *Government Executive*. July 29, 2025. <https://www.govexec.com/management/2025/07/nsp-slashes-most-career-executive-roles-after-shedding-one-third-staff/407066/>; Pien Huang. "With new cuts at CDC, some fear there's 'nobody to answer the phone'." *National Public Radio*. October 16, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/10/14/nx-s1-5574469/cdc-shutdown-federal-layoffs>; Richard G. Frank and Sherry Glied. "The Trump administration's NIH and FDA cuts will negatively impact patients." *Brookings Institute*. May 14, 2025; <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-trump-administrations-nih-and-fda-cuts-will-negatively-impact-patients/>.

free world.⁶ Cumulatively, these cuts to NIH and NSF alone could lead to \$10 billion per year lost from the U.S. economic output.⁷ In total, the Trump Administration's proposed budget would reduce U.S. economic output by more than \$46 billion, produce 860 fewer STEM Ph.D. graduates annually, and eliminate 10,700 research positions.⁸

At the very moment when your office is proposing or cheerleading deep cuts to the NSF, NIH, and NASA, the CCP is dramatically expanding its STEM investments. At last week's 4th Plenum gathering of top CCP officials, Minister of Science and Technology Yin Hejun, the PRC's total R&D investment in 2024 reached \$500 billion, representing a 48 percent increase from 2020.⁹ These investments build off previous funding outlays from the PRC's 2025 Two Sessions, where Premier Li Qiang announced an 8.3 percent increase in science and technology spending, a 6.1 percent increase in education spending.¹⁰ These investments bring Beijing's R&D budget to \$172 billion, second only to the United States at \$193 billion.¹¹

These cuts to the crown jewels of U.S. STEM and research institutions are already having a dramatic impact. Since 2024, at least 85 early-career and senior U.S.-based scientists have joined PRC research institutions full time, with more than half making the move in 2025.¹² U.S. cuts to STEM, combined with PRC investments, and programs to attract international talent, such as the PRC's K visa program are creating a potential pathway for Beijing leapfrog the U.S as the world's STEM and innovation leader.¹³ We cannot let that happen.

Based on these concerns, I respectfully request your responses to the following questions:

1. Has the Office of Management and Budget conducted any assessment of how proposed and enacted budget cuts to federal research agencies, including NSF, NIH, NASA, CDC, and NOAA, will affect U.S. economic and scientific competitiveness relative to the PRC?
2. Has OMB analyzed how reduced funding for scientific institutions and workforce programs will impact America's innovation pipeline, including university research capacity and STEM talent development?

⁶ Dr. John Drake. "Trump's NIH And NSF Cuts Could Cost The U.S. Economy \$10 Billion Annually." *Forbes*. May 19, 2025.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/johndrake/2025/05/19/trumps-nih-and-nsf-cuts-could-cost-the-us-economy-10-billion-annually/>

⁷ Dr. John Drake. "Trump's NIH And NSF Cuts Could Cost The U.S. Economy \$10 Billion Annually." *Forbes*. May 19, 2025.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/johndrake/2025/05/19/trumps-nih-and-nsf-cuts-could-cost-the-us-economy-10-billion-annually/>

⁸ U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. "New Democratic Staff Report: Direct Evidence Trump Administration Has Been Illegally Imposing President's Proposed Budget Cuts at NASA Since Early Summer—Threatening Safety, Mission, Science." September 29, 2025. <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/2025/9/new-democratic-staff-report-direct-evidence-trump-administration-has-been-illegally-imposing-president-s-proposed-budget-cuts-at-nasa-since-early-summer-threatening-safety-mission-science>.

⁹Victoria Bela. "China's R&D spending passes US\$496 billion in steady rise to hi-tech dominance." *South China Morning Post*. January 24, 2025. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3296098/chinas-rd-growth-passes-us496-billion-steady-rise-hi-tech-dominance>; *People's Daily*. "Innovations speed modern industrial journey." October 20, 2025.

<https://en.people.cn/n3/2025/1020/c90000-20379552.html>

¹⁰ Jack Burnham and Johanna Yang. "Aiming for Parity With U.S., China Announces Increase in Science and Technology Spending." *Foundation for the Defense of Democracy*. March 19, 2025. https://www.fdd.org/analysis/policy_briefs/2025/03/19/aiming-for-parity-with-u-s-china-announces-increase-in-science-and-technology-spending/

¹¹ Jack Burnham and Johanna Yang. "Aiming for Parity With U.S., China Announces Increase in Science and Technology Spending." *Foundation for the Defense of Democracy*. March 19, 2025. https://www.fdd.org/analysis/policy_briefs/2025/03/19/aiming-for-parity-with-u-s-china-announces-increase-in-science-and-technology-spending/

¹² Joyce Jiang, Simone McCarthy and Yong Xiong. "In the race to attract the world's smartest minds, China is gaining on the US." *CNN*. September 29, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/29/china/china-reverse-brain-drain-science-tech-competition-us-intl-hnk>

¹³ Joyce Jiang, Simone McCarthy and Yong Xiong. "In the race to attract the world's smartest minds, China is gaining on the US." *CNN*. September 29, 2025. <https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/29/china/china-reverse-brain-drain-science-tech-competition-us-intl-hnk>; Raja Krishnamoorthi. "Krishnamoorthi Warns Trump Administration Visa Crackdown Threatens U.S. Economic Competitiveness and Hands Global Talent Edge to the Chinese Communist Party." House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the U.S. and the Chinese Communist Party. October 23, 2025. <https://democrats-selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/media/press-releases/krishnamoorthi-warns-trump-administration-visa-crackdown-threatens-us-economic>

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your comprehensive response

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raja Krishnamoorthi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ranking Member
House Select Committee on the CCP