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PROFS Statement on the Executive Order Impacting National Institutes of Health Research Awards

On September 18th, the Trump administration ordered the Office of Management and Budget to draft new rules, in the form of an executive order, that would affect how the National Institutes of Health would make research awards. The proposal would create a committee that would have veto power over the scientific committee's decisions about the granting of awards, and would politicize decisions about what science to fund, rather than base them in science.

On September 23rd, major news outlets reported that the White House is moving away from the proposal after significant pushback from Republican and Democratic members of Congress. But make no mistake: the Trump administration is no friend of science, and it will undoubtedly continue to intrude politically on the eighty-year-old compact between the federal government and the nation's research universities to advance scientific discovery, knowledge, and research wherever it leads.

This latest episode shows the power of advocacy: had those brave senators and representatives not expressed their objections to the Trump administration putting its political thumb on the scale of research, it would have moved forward with its plan. And PROFS is aware of this power, and plans to use it. We are in contact with members of the Wisconsin Congressional Delegation in Washington, urging them to reject the administration's Lysenkoist approach to discovery, and will continue to advocate for the advancement of knowledge free from ideological and political constraint.

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