
NIH Funding for Alzheimer Disease and Dementia Research

Grant delays and cuts during the Trump administration

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WHAT THE EVIDENCE SHOWS

For families living with dementia, a research delay can mean a longer wait for answers. This report looks at grants that the Trump administration delayed or ended. It explains what the dollar amounts tell us and where the records fall short.

The records show that research worth tens of millions of dollars was disrupted. They do not give one exact total still being held back on October 2, 2026.

Key figure	What it means
\$25.01 million	Estimated funds left unpaid in 64 disrupted grant records tied to Alzheimer’s or dementia. The tracker is dated September 14, 2026. [1–2]
\$14.34 million	The share of that estimate for U.S. groups. It covers 63 records. [2]
\$94.3 million	An older Senate finding about 65 grants that were ended or frozen. It used data through January 26, 2026. [3]

These figures are not amounts we can add together. They cover different dates and measure different things. The \$25.01 million estimate was calculated for this report. NIH has not confirmed it as the exact unpaid balance. The Senate figure describes affected grant funding, not a verified amount still unpaid.

How the money reaches research teams

Congress gives money to the National Institutes of Health, or NIH. NIH then awards grants to schools and other research groups. A grant can be stuck in review, delayed after approval, frozen, or ended. Each problem affects research, but each has a different effect on the money.

The annual budget is a separate figure

The 2026 spending law added \$100 million for Alzheimer’s and dementia research. This brought the planned yearly amount to about \$3.9 billion. President Trump signed the law on February 3, 2026. That does not prove that each grant was paid on time. It also does not mean the full \$3.9 billion was held back. [4–5]

WHERE THE RECENT ESTIMATE COMES FROM

Grant Witness tracks NIH grants that have been disrupted. Its September 14 file listed 411 records linked to Alzheimer's or dementia. It marked 347 as restored. Those records were left out of this estimate. [1–2]

That left 64 disrupted records: 63 marked ended and one frozen. They cover 61 main awards. Extra grants attached to a main award are listed as separate records. [2]

Group and grant number	Work supported	Estimated unpaid
Peking University R01AG037031	Health and aging in China	\$10.678m
University of Pittsburgh R01AG072641	Alzheimer's risk and brain structure	\$2.490m
University of Pittsburgh R01AG072652	Neighborhoods and dementia risk	\$2.353m
Columbia University R01NS123639	Thinking and memory after heart surgery	\$2.252m
Boston University R01AG074213	Racism and brain health in aging	\$1.455m
Gerontological Society of America U24AG083253	Support for minority aging research	\$1.044m
Emory University R01MH138893	Unfair treatment and brain scans	\$0.670m
Other 57 records	Research, training, and extra support	\$4.073m
Total	64 records	\$25.014m

In the table, m means million. Amounts are rounded. The full total is \$25,013,691.94. The U.S. share is \$14,336,093.19. The remaining \$10.68 million is tied to Peking University in China. [2]

These are balances for whole grants tagged to this field. Some grants also cover other health issues. The table does not show that every dollar was meant only for dementia research.

WHAT THE ESTIMATE CANNOT TELL US

The tracker is useful, but it is not a full audit. Its latest money records were dated June 30, 2026. A grant could have received more money or been restored after that date. Final accounting changes could also shift its balance. [1–2]

Missing parts of a grant’s spending history can make the unpaid amount look too large. This is a concern for grants that have run for many years. The China study, for example, carries the broad label Dementia. [2]

The tracker predicted the research labels for six of the selected records. Those records make up \$8.28 million of the estimate. Leaving them out gives \$16.73 million across 58 records. This is a check on how the labels affect the result. It is not a proven minimum or a range of likely error. [1–2]

Older figures describe earlier problems

Amount	What was reported	Why it is not a current total
\$94.3 million	65 Alzheimer’s grants ended or frozen by January 26, 2026. [3]	The Senate report does not match each grant to its unpaid balance.
\$65 million	2025 delays at 14 Alzheimer’s research centers. [3, 6]	We cannot assume all of that money is still held back.
\$600 million	About 1,000 grants awaiting review in February 2025. [7]	This was an estimate of a review backlog, not approved grants all canceled for good.
Nearly \$36 million	A UC Davis-led study ended in March 2025 and restored in April. [6]	Its full value should not count as money now held back.

Adding these amounts would mix a review backlog with delayed, ended, and restored grants. It could count the same work more than once. We also cannot subtract the September estimate from the January figure to find how much was restored.

HOW THESE ACTIONS AFFECTED RESEARCH

Ending a grant can interrupt work already in progress. In a lawsuit filed on September 16, 2026, researchers described breaks in visits with study members, data review, and follow-up. The case included Alzheimer's research. [10–11]

The researchers say NIH screened or ended grants based on disfavored views. Those are claims in a lawsuit. They are not a final court ruling that each grant was ended unlawfully. [10–11]

Two grants at Pittsburgh

Federal grant records show that two University of Pittsburgh awards were ended. One studied Alzheimer's risk and brain structure. The other studied neighborhoods and brain health in aging. [8–9]

The first grant, R01AG072641, had a new award action in June 2026. Its federal record then listed an end date of August 7, 2026. Its total awards over time were \$9.62 million. The tracker estimated \$2.49 million left unpaid. These are different measures of the same grant. [2, 8]

The second grant, R01AG072652, also appears as ended in the tracker. Its estimated unpaid balance was \$2.35 million. These examples show why a grant's full value should not be treated as the amount still due. [2, 9]

What the federal watchdog found

On August 5, 2025, the Government Accountability Office, or GAO, found that NIH had unlawfully held back funds. It cited the Impoundment Control Act, which limits how the executive branch can withhold money Congress has approved. [12]

GAO said NIH made about \$8 billion less in grant commitments from February through June 2025 than in those months of 2024. That figure covered all NIH research. It was not a total for Alzheimer's or dementia. GAO did not rule on the right to end each grant. [12]

HHS told GAO that the pause in review meetings had ended. GAO found that this did not fully explain the withholding or show that the funding problem was solved. [12]

WHY THE YEARLY TOTALS DO NOT SETTLE THE ISSUE

NIH reported \$35.3 billion in grants to outside groups in fiscal 2025. That was slightly more than in 2024, but there were fewer awards. NIH also paid more years of some grants up front. More dollars in one year can therefore support fewer projects. [13]

On October 2, 2026, STAT reported that NIH had awarded its roughly \$34 billion budget for outside grants in fiscal 2026. That covers the whole agency. It does not show that each ended dementia grant was restored, or that each group received payment. [14]

How this report counted the grants

The calculation used the September 14 Grant Witness data file. It kept records marked Disrupted with a spending label that included Alzheimer or dementia. It counted each grant and extra grant record once, then added the amount left at the time of disruption. [2]

The data fields used were `current_status`, `spending_categories`, `grant_id`, `subgrant_id`, and `remaining_at_disruption`. Capital letters did not affect the search. No selected balance was missing or below zero. Twelve balances were zero. A zero balance does not mean the research was not disrupted. [2]

As a check, the same sum for all disrupted NIH records was \$508.720 million. That matched the tracker's published \$508.72 million total. It includes all research fields and is not a dementia total. This report adds no future grants that were not yet awarded and no rejected requests. [1–2]

What would give us an exact answer

NIH would need to release a grant-by-grant account for this research. It should show money promised, money paid, and money still due. It should also show when each grant was frozen, ended, or restored.

That account would need to separate unpaid money from funds moved to other work. It would also need to show future funds that NIH no longer has a duty to pay. Without those records, no exact current total can be confirmed.

The clearest supported answer is that grants worth tens of millions of dollars were delayed or ended. The recent tracker points to about \$25 million in unpaid awarded funds. That estimate has limits. It is not proof that the full \$3.9 billion yearly research budget is being withheld.

SOURCES

[1] Grant Witness

[NIH Weekly Report — September 14, 2026](#)

Defines lost funding, reports the \$508.72 million NIH-wide estimate, and identifies the June 30 financial-data date.

[2] Grant Witness

[September 14, 2026 grant-level data](#)

Original calculations in this report use this CSV. The estimate is independently calculated here, not an Alzheimer's total published by Grant Witness.

[3] U.S. Senate HELP Committee minority staff

[Putting Cures Out of Reach, February 2, 2026](#)

Page 5: \$94.3 million and 65 Alzheimer's grants. Page 2, note 8: January 26, 2026 cutoff. This is a minority staff report, not a nonpartisan GAO audit.

[4] Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Impact Movement

[Research increase signed into law, February 3, 2026](#)

Confirms \$100 million increase and approximately \$3.9 billion annual research investment.

[5] National Institutes of Health

[Notice of Fiscal Policies in Effect for FY 2026, March 18, 2026](#)

NOT-OD-26-059 identifies the enacted law and NIH funding policies.

[6] Scientific American

[Lifesaving Alzheimer's Research Delayed by Trump Funding Cuts, April 18, 2025](#)

Reports the UC Davis study's termination and reinstatement and the uncertainty at 14 research centers.

[7] Office of Senator Tammy Baldwin

[Halt on lifesaving research, February 14, 2025](#)

Source of the estimated \$600 million and 1,000-grant review backlog. A congressional office estimate.

SOURCES CONTINUED

[8] HHS Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System

[Award R01AG072641](#)

Federal record of the Pittsburgh brain structure and Alzheimer's risk study; includes termination and award actions. Accessed October 2, 2026.

[9] HHS Tracking Accountability in Government Grants System

[Award R01AG072652](#)

Federal record for the Pittsburgh neighborhood and cognitive aging study. Accessed October 2, 2026.

[10] Researchers represented by the ACLU and other counsel

[Salles et al. v. NIH et al., complaint filed September 16, 2026](#)

Case 3:26-cv-10510, document 1. Pages 6–7 describe the Pittsburgh plaintiffs and alleged research disruptions.

[11] American Civil Liberties Union

[Researchers Challenge NIH Screening of Grants for Disfavored Viewpoints, September 16, 2026](#)

Litigants' account of the case and effects on Alzheimer's research; advocacy and party statements are identified as such.

[12] Government Accountability Office

[Decision B-337203, August 5, 2025](#)

Finding that NIH withholding violated the Impoundment Control Act; includes the NIH-wide \$8 billion comparison.

[13] National Institutes of Health

[Fiscal Year 2025 By the Numbers, March 12, 2026](#)

Official extramural grant totals, award counts, and explanation of forward funding.

[14] STAT

[NIH awarded all its grant funding, but delayed and opaque decisions stymied researchers, October 2, 2026](#)

Contemporaneous analysis reporting the full approximately \$34 billion fiscal 2026 external grants budget was awarded. The accessible article summary supports this limited point.