

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 15, 2025

Jennifer Bastress Tahmasebi
Interim Agency Head
AmeriCorps
250 E St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Interim Agency Head Bastress Tahmasebi:

We write to express our grave concern with recent AmeriCorps grant terminations, reports that DOGE is interfering with operations at AmeriCorps¹, the demobilization of National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) members², and reports that the Trump Administration has placed nearly all of the agency's staff on administrative leave.³ While a recent court order instituted a 14-day temporary restraining order on staff reductions at AmeriCorps,⁴ the damage of firing staff and eliminating \$400 million in grants has already been felt across the country. These actions make it nearly impossible for AmeriCorps to effectively administer its programs and carry out its statutory responsibilities, including supporting the approximately 200,000 AmeriCorps members and volunteers, awarding all fiscal year 2025 grants and funding appropriated by Congress in a timely manner if at all, and conducting meaningful oversight. The grant terminations and potential issues awarding fiscal year 2025 grant funding will have a catastrophic impact on the ability of AmeriCorps members to carry out work in communities all over the country — responding to natural disasters, serving as classroom teachers, providing tutoring services, and helping build housing in rural communities.

On Friday, April 25th, 1,031 grantees—including states, local non-profits, and faith-based organizations—received grant termination notices, which stated that the programs, “no longer effectuate agency priorities.” Grant termination notices amounted to nearly \$400 million, roughly 41 percent of the agency's grant funding,⁵ although actual savings may be far less than that. These terminations appear to contradict both statutory and regulatory provisions governing changes to agency priorities. For example, 42 USC 12572(c)(2) requires AmeriCorps to provide advance notice to potential applicants of any national service priorities to be in effect for a fiscal year.⁶ Further, Section 401 of Title IV of Division D of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, a term and condition carried forward in the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, requires that “CNCS shall make any significant changes to program requirements, service delivery or policy only through public notice and comment rulemaking.”⁷

In addition, these programs were not notified that they were out of compliance and the agency failed to provide 7 days' notice of proposed cuts, which is required under applicable regulations.⁸ These illegal grant terminations attempt to supersede congressional intent at the expense of communities in need of crucial services. More than 1,000 programs will be forced to close and over 32,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors

¹ <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/west-wing-playbook-remaking-government/2025/04/09/musks-man-at-nasa-00282382>

² <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/west-wing-playbook-remaking-government/2025/04/09/musks-man-at-nasa-00282382>

³ <https://apnews.com/article/trump-doge-ameri-corps-cuts-volunteers-service-9b9c0e0cfb82ba6513478a35d3889b43>

⁴ <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.cand.448664/gov.uscourts.cand.448664.85.0.pdf?source=email>

⁵ https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2025/04/25/ameri-corps-grant-cuts-doge/?_pml=1

⁶ 42 USC 12572(c)(2).

⁷ Section 401 of Title IV of Division D of P.L. 118-47.

⁸ <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-45/subtitle-B/chapter-XII/part-1206>; <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title42-section12636&num=0&edition=prelim>

volunteers will be released from their service terms early.⁹ These demobilized members and volunteers will lose access to their living stipends and may be left without other benefits, including healthcare and housing. Additionally, staff who administer AmeriCorps programs at a state and local level will likely be laid-off due to budget constraints as a result of these grant terminations. In response, on April 29th, 24 states and the District of Columbia filed a lawsuit alleging that the Trump administration has exceeded its authority under the law and is in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act and the separation of powers under the Constitution.¹⁰

The recent demobilization of AmeriCorps NCCC members is already having rippling effects in communities across this country. AmeriCorps NCCC was authorized by Congress to strengthen communities, develop the next generation of leaders, and help communities respond to natural disasters and other environmental issues.¹¹ In 2024, NCCC members performed over 717,000 hours of service to the nation and their service benefited communities in 48 states.¹² NCCC members helped over 388,000 people in disaster areas and over 8,700 students in K-12 tutoring programs.¹³ In the fall of 2024, AmeriCorps NCCC led efforts to respond to the communities devastated by Hurricanes Helene and Milton.¹⁴ It is devastating to hear that NCCC members were pulled out as they were continuing to help victims of those hurricanes rebuild their homes. We urge the swift reversal of the termination of NCCC members' service terms so that they can get back to helping communities.

Further, by laying off nearly the entire agency staff, AmeriCorps is violating the law. The Administration's actions make it impossible for AmeriCorps to carry out statutorily required functions and congressional intent, and raise serious questions about AmeriCorps being able to spend all appropriated fiscal year 2025 appropriated funding. For example, the administration has not decided how it will spend nearly \$200 million in fiscal year 2025 funding that was provided for AmeriCorps grant programs in fiscal year 2024. The most straightforward interpretation of a full-year CR is to continue funding for all programs and activities at the prior year's level. After all, Congress enacted the fiscal year 2024 appropriation with overwhelmingly bipartisan majorities a little more than a year ago. If Congress wanted to make changes to AmeriCorps funding in the fiscal year 2025 appropriation bill, it would have done so, but it did not. The Administration's effort to eliminate AmeriCorps is contrary to the bipartisan record of Congress.

Lastly, AmeriCorps members cannot earn their service hours or be placed in schools until the grant awards supporting them are in place. In particular, the delay in awarding of grant funds could impact the ability of the AmeriCorps members to earn the Segal Education Award by not providing them sufficient service hours to earn such education awards. Also, many Teach for America/AmeriCorps members use the Segal awards to cover the costs of teacher certification, without which they would not be able to serve as classroom teachers.¹⁵ Teach for America members often teach in the most understaffed rural and urban schools around the nation. At a time of teacher shortages in key subject areas across the country,¹⁶ the slow release of fiscal year 2025 AmeriCorps grant funds could exacerbate such teacher shortages.

We request that you provide written answers to the following questions as soon as possible, but not later than May 30, 2025.

⁹ https://www.statecommissions.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=342:asc-statement-on-the-termination-of-ameri-corps-grants&catid=23:news&Itemid=191

¹⁰ <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/press/2025/042925.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.congress.gov/111/plaws/publ13/PLAW-111publ13.pdf>

¹² <https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2025-01/AmeriCorps-NCCC-2024-Annual-Report.pdf>

¹³ <https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2025-01/AmeriCorps-NCCC-2024-Annual-Report.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/2025-01/AmeriCorps-NCCC-2024-Annual-Report.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.teachforamerica.org/experience/preparing-to-teach/ameri-corps>

¹⁶ <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/home/>

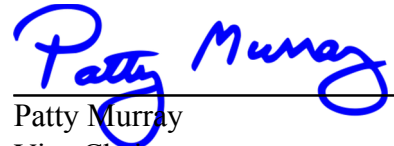
1. Please provide a list of every grant that has been terminated since January 20th, including the total amount of awards to each grantee, the amount of funds that each grantee has spent up to the date of the grant's termination, and the amount of remaining unspent funds for each award.
2. Please detail how the grant terminations noticed on April 25th comply with statutory requirements including 42 USC 12572 and Section 401 of Title IV of Division D of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024.
3. What calculation is being used to determine the amount of a Segal Award a member will receive for a terminated grant?
4. Please provide AmeriCorps' own estimates of the number of volunteers and members expected to be demobilized and terminated due to the cancellation of grants since January 20th.
5. For each office, please provide the number of staff on board as of January 19th and as of today's date.
6. For each office, please provide the number of staff placed on paid administrative leave since January 20th as of the pay period including January 23, 2025 and the most recent pay period.
7. For each office, please provide the total salaries and benefits costs of staff placed on paid administrative leave since January 20th as of the pay period including January 23, 2025 and the most recent pay period. For the agency in total, please provide the estimated total salaries and benefits costs incurred for employees placed on administrative leave since January 20th.
8. On January 28, 2025, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) sent a so-called "Fork in the Road" email to more than two million federal employees offering the opportunity to take "deferred resignation" by February 6, 2025. For each office, please provide:
 - a. The number of employees that offered to resign as part of the deferred resignation program.
 - b. The number of employees whose resignations were accepted as part of the deferred resignation program.
 - c. The number and types of duties re-assigned from employees whose resignations were accepted as part of the deferred resignation program.
 - d. The number and types of duties eliminated from employees whose resignations were accepted as part of the deferred resignation program.
 - e. The roles and number of personnel who tried to accept but were excluded from the deferred resignation program.
 - f. For AmeriCorps in total, the estimated total salaries and benefits costs in fiscal year 2025 for employees whose resignations were accepted as part of the deferred resignation program.
9. The President and his team have directed all agencies to develop Agency Reorganization Plans in phases through mid-April.²⁵ Please provide us with a briefing of such plans no later than seven days after receipt of this letter.
10. The email that was sent to NCCC members on April 15, 2025 stated that the "AmeriCorps NCCC is working within new operational parameters that impact the program's ability to sustain program operations." Given that Congress has not cut funding for this program, please detail the specific operational parameters that have changed and why NCCC can no longer carry out its statutorily required activities?

11. What actions has DOGE made the agency take to date?
12. Who at DOGE made the decision to demobilize the NCCC members and agency staff cuts? And under what authority did such staff have to make such a decision?
13. What information did DOGE collect from the agency?
14. Was any personally identifiable information of AmeriCorps members shared with DOGE? If so, what types of information?
15. With NCCC members being sent home, how does the agency plan to fulfill its obligations to the disaster-impacted communities where NCCC members were working?

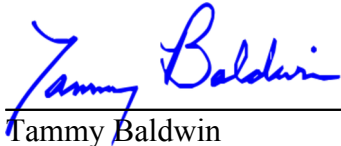
Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on
Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions



Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on
Appropriations



Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related
Agencies



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee on
Education and Workforce



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress
Ranking Member, Committee on
Appropriations