

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 25, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

As members of the Minnesota Congressional delegation, we write to express our deep concern about the Administration's decision to suddenly rescind or cancel millions of dollars in obligated, approved grants for work at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). In total, approximately \$226 million in Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) grants and \$27.5 million in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grants were clawed back from our state, jeopardizing hundreds of projects that stand to improve the health of Minnesotans and all Americans.

This funding suddenly terminated by the Administration had not expired and was awarded by the *American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)*. Let us be clear: this multi-year funding was appropriated by Congress. As such, the Administration's decision to terminate these grants is not only detrimental to our state's economy and takes away critical services from our constituents, but goes against Congressional intent and runs afoul of settled law.

The CDC grants awarded to Minnesota – which comprise about a quarter of MDH's total funding for state fiscal year 2026 – support statewide efforts to serve seniors, curb infectious disease outbreaks, provide laboratory support for hospitals and health care systems, plan and implement education and awareness campaigns and improve Tribal public health infrastructure. Further, the Administration's actions have led to the loss of 170 public health workers from MDH, with an additional 20 offers rescinded and many other employees' standing with MDH still at risk.<sup>1</sup> Impacted workers include those that were assigned to support the state's response to avian flu, conduct wastewater surveillance and run community clinics. Further, MDH was well aware that this funding was meant to be supplemental and was working in good faith with CDC to prepare for its expiration. To prematurely terminate these grants with no notice to state partners means that critical projects will have to be abandoned, putting the health and lives of countless Minnesotans at risk.

Also implicated in these cuts is SAMHSA funding for behavioral health services provided through Minnesota's DHS. These grants provide critical resources to address our state's coinciding mental health and substance use crises. They support mental health and substance use disorder services for children and young adults in school-based settings, as well as an expansion of the continuum of care for opioid related substance use disorders, including workforce expansion for counselors, peer recovery support workers and other providers. The funding also provides for greater coordination between law enforcement, emergency medical services, health providers and 988 crisis lines, and for the advancement of telehealth opportunities to expand crisis services for hard-to-reach locations. These initiatives have been effective – from 2022 to 2023, Minnesota saw an 8% decrease in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2025/layoffs040125.html>.

overall drug overdose deaths.<sup>2</sup> Due to these federal funds, Minnesota is projecting an even steeper reduction in overdose deaths to be reported for 2024. Cutting the knees out from under local and state behavioral health responses just as they are yielding positive results is short-sighted and will lead to more preventable tragedies in our state and across the country.

Our communities deserve more certainty from the Administration when it comes to funding decisions that will impact the public's health. As such, we request a response to the following questions by May 2, 2025, at 5 p.m. ET:

1. Provide a list of all terminated grants and contracts, including grants that were terminated and later reinstated, as well as grants that are under review for termination that were awarded to the state of Minnesota.
2. Absent this funding, how does the Administration intend to support state efforts to reduce the spread of infectious disease, including avian flu, measles and other infectious diseases?
3. Absent this funding, how does the Administration intend to support state efforts to address mental health and substance use, including opioid use?
4. How does the Administration plan to track the direct impacts of these grant recissions, including possible increases in overdose deaths, new cases of infectious diseases and closures of community clinics and other points of care?
5. SAMHSA has imposed new, administratively burdensome steps to the process of requesting reimbursement for work done by grantees prior to termination of the grants, which must be submitted within 90 days of termination. What steps is SAMHSA taking to clarify expectations and ensure timely action on reimbursement requests?
6. What authority does the Administration have to prematurely terminate SAMHSA funding without evidence of noncompliance, where *ARPA* expressly gave states until September 30, 2025, to expend these funds?
7. How did the ending of the public health emergency in May 2023 require the termination without notice of the CDC and SAMHSA grants in March of 2025?


All in all, these grant recissions to Minnesota represent part of the single largest cut by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to a domestic program anywhere in the government to date.<sup>3</sup> There is a human cost to these abrupt recissions – they do not amount to cutting costs, but to cutting corners with peoples' health and livelihoods, and which will ultimately cost our country more as the population gets sicker and requires more expensive care. We urge you to reverse these clawbacks and to work with state partners, like MDH and Minnesota DHS, to determine what is needed to protect the health of Minnesotans and all Americans.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.health.state.mn.us/news/pressrel/2024/opioids100924.html>.

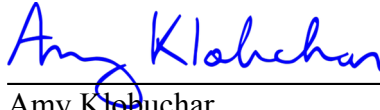
<sup>3</sup> [DOGE Is On a Tear at HHS. Even Insiders Are Struggling to Keep Up.](#)

Sincerely,



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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



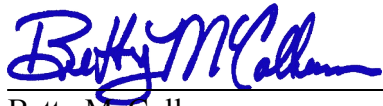
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Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



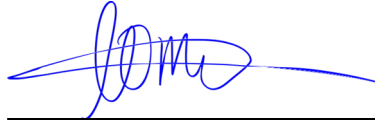
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Tina Smith  
United States Senator




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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



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Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



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Kelly Morrison  
Member of Congress