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How the Trump Administration's DOGE Cuts Are Harming Women

A new analysis by the Center for American Progress shows DOGE has cut at least \$3 billion in grants for research, education, and other programs that help women and girls—especially women of color.

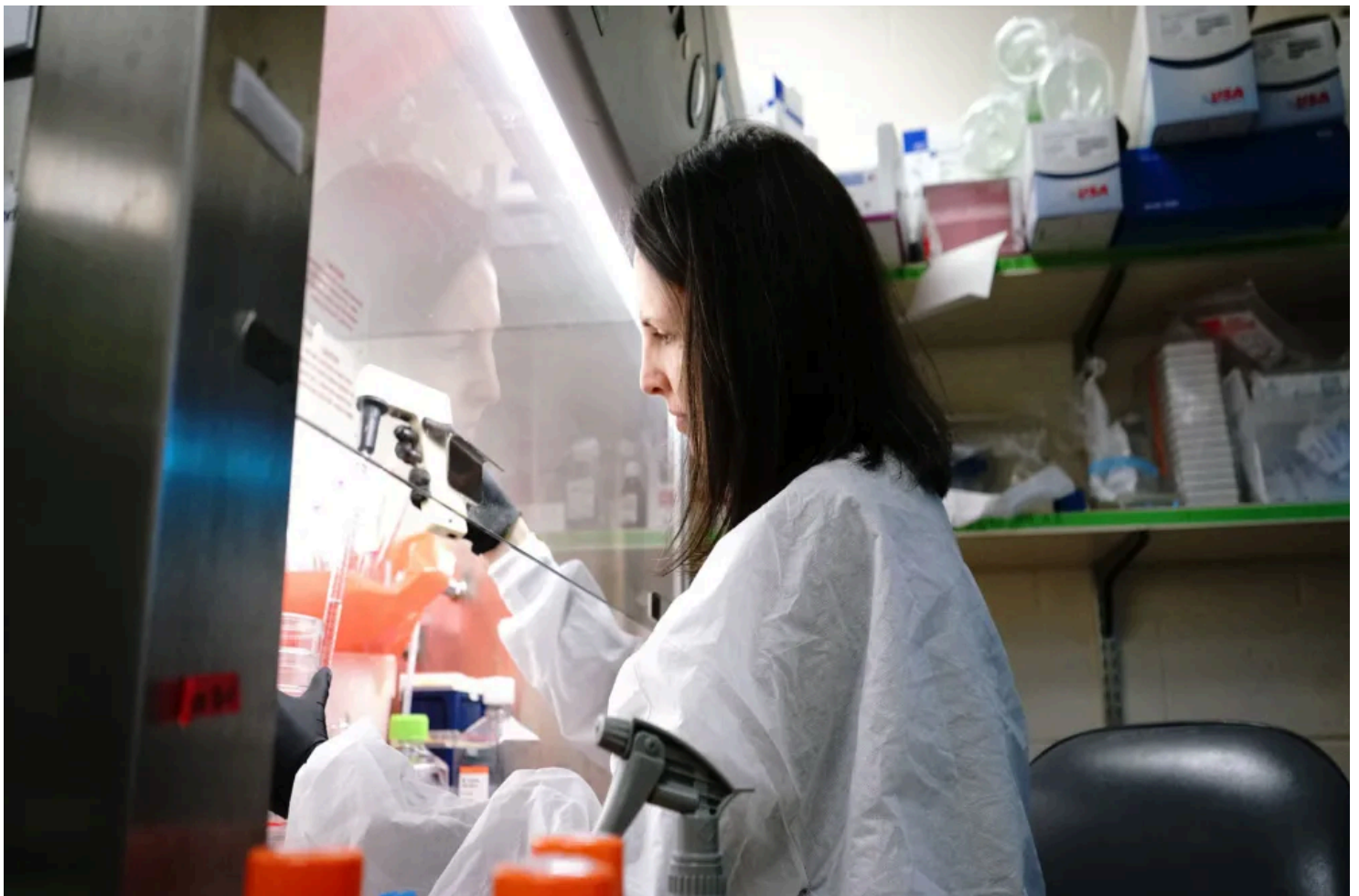
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A researcher splits cells for testing at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, on April 14, 2025. (Getty/Drew Singh/Newsday)

Earlier this year, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) implemented sweeping and unlawful cuts across various federal agencies and programs. New analysis by the Center for American Progress of data through

May 23, 2025, finds that—under the pretense of reducing waste, fraud, and abuse—DOGE eliminated at least \$3 billion in grants that were specific to women’s health and economic security. Not included in this total are countless more cuts to grants that affect women even if they are not the primary target group. The claimed “savings” from these cuts are substantially smaller than the total grant value, given that many projects were stopped after they were already underway. DOGE’s draconian and extensive cuts threaten to undermine essential public programs and the social safety net that women rely on while halting investments in women-centered medical research and innovations.



By cutting programs focused on women’s health, safety, and workforce participation, DOGE is not only rolling back years—if not decades—of progress; it’s reinforcing the same inequities many of these programs were designed to fix.

These cuts were compounded by President Donald Trump’s executive order released in January targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives across the federal government. Specifically, this order gutted efforts aimed at addressing systemic barriers facing women—particularly women of color—in education, career advancement, and workplace protections. By cutting programs focused on women’s health, safety, and workforce participation, DOGE is not only rolling back years—if not decades—of progress; it’s reinforcing the same inequities many of these programs were designed to fix.

How DOGE cuts will harm women

The Trump administration’s DOGE cuts are slashing investments to meet the unique health needs of women, provide safety and stability for survivors of domestic or gender-based violence, and expand women’s economic advancement.

Women’s health research

Despite decades of chronic underfunding of and gender disparities in medical research, DOGE has canceled hundreds of women-focused research grants. This includes grants focused on reproductive health, chronic illnesses, and even vaccine safety for women who are pregnant or breastfeeding. These cuts would be particularly harmful for medical advances for Black women and other women of color, whose illnesses already often go ignored or misdiagnosed. For example, DOGE canceled a National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant on the structure and growth of uterine fibroid tumors, which affect 70 to 80 percent of women by the time they reach age 50. This study would have developed a new tool to detect and treat fibroid tumors, which disproportionately affect Black women, who are more likely to experience more severe symptoms.

DOGE has also canceled funding for several potentially lifesaving research projects about pregnant women. One study on how stress influences racial and ethnic differences in maternal health outcomes for women's hypertensive disorders was canceled. High blood pressure-related disorders during pregnancy, such as preeclampsia, are a leading cause of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States. The defunded study would have been among the first to examine how social and environmental stress could lead to higher rates of death among pregnant Black women, whose maternal mortality rate is 3.5 times higher than that of white, non-Hispanic women. An NIH-funded study on the effects of COVID-19 vaccines on pregnant women would have informed global safety and efficacy standards for vaccinations during pregnancy and advanced scientific knowledge about how to prevent severe complications, including death, from COVID-19 during pregnancy.

Research on diseases that disproportionately affect women—including Alzheimer's, autoimmune disorders, and gender-specific mental health challenges such as anxiety-related conditions and depression—has also been terminated. These cuts will derail years of research progress on health issues that primarily affect women or that present differently in women compared with men. In one NIH-funded multiyear study, researchers were following 600 participants to understand the effects of stress, social isolation and loneliness, and barriers to care and support services on their brains over time and the associated risk of developing Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Restarting an interrupted multiyear longitudinal study is essentially impossible.

Social safety net

DOGE's cuts have also targeted vital social safety net programs for women and girls. Many of these programs were created to support domestic violence survivors in need of transitional housing. For programs operating in rural areas where access to safe housing and emergency care is already scarce, the results would be catastrophic.

For example, DOGE canceled funding for a housing assistance program in Alaska, cutting nearly \$500,000 in resources that helped marginalized individuals combat housing discrimination and obtain remedies to rebuild their lives. Some of the target beneficiaries were domestic violence survivors, who are overwhelmingly women. Without this support, more women may be forced to remain in unsafe environments, increasing their risk of harm or death.

Workforce programs

DOGE additionally revoked funding for programs that support women's participation in the labor force. The cuts eliminated or drastically reduced many federally funded job training and education programs that empower women, especially single mothers and caregivers.

For example, one canceled U.S. Department of State award had been granted to the nonprofit United States Energy Association to increase women's leadership in the clean energy workforce. In Georgia, DOGE cut funding for Spelman College's "The Next Generation of Black Women Scientists" program to prepare Black women for doctoral programs to pursue biomedical research careers—efforts that not only diversify STEM but also increase innovation.

Similarly, DOGE eliminated a grant to the University of Chicago designed to improve mentorship for early-career physician-scientists. The project was to conduct a randomized trial to test how different social and environmental factors and mentorship for women medical students and medical students of

color could lead to increased confidence in their research, productivity, and potential among women and people of color.

DOGE also canceled a grant to Fayetteville, North Carolina, to help middle school girls who are both in military-connected families and attend local public schools enroll in STEM-related courses. The area around Fayetteville includes one of the largest U.S. military bases, making this loss particularly significant for the community.

Conclusion

DOGE has already eliminated at least \$3 billion from grant programs that would have improved women's health, supported survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, or grown the nation's STEM workforce by attracting women to the field. Countless more grants targeting women's health and economic security may have been eliminated since the latest data are from May 23, 2025.

The effects of these cuts will be felt most acutely by women of color, given that many of the eliminated programs focused on reducing health and economic disparities for that population. These sweeping cuts have already been disruptive and many losses cannot be recuperated, especially in the case of multiyear and longitudinal research that was halted. By undermining programs that support women's health, safety, and economic participation, DOGE's actions are only reinforcing existing gender inequities and harming generations of women.

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The Women's Initiative develops robust, progressive policies and solutions to ensure all women can participate in the economy and live healthy, productive lives.