



WOMEN
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Women First Research Coalition

WFRC Third Quarter 2025 Activities Update

Announcement of New WFRC Chair-Elect

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Brett Einerson has been elected as the WFRC chair-elect for 2025-2026. Below, please find Dr. Einerson's bio. We look forward to his leadership for the coming year! We appreciate the work of our past chair who is rotating off, Dr. Mostafa Borahay. Dr. David Turok will serve as the chair and Dr. Marianna Alperin as the past chair for 2025-2026.

Dr. Einerson is an Associate Professor in Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Director of the Utah Placenta Accreta Program at the University of Utah. He brings two key strengths in his role as the WFRC chair-elect: robust clinical research excellence supported by continuous NIH funding and demonstrated ability to build collaborative networks across academic institutions, patient advocacy organizations, and clinical practice settings to translate research into improved patient care.

Dr. Einerson's NIH experience positions him well to advocate for expanded women's health research support. He understands firsthand how NIH investment transforms clinical practice and improves patient outcomes. His NIH supported work has enabled novel approaches to managing placenta accreta spectrum that preserve fertility while ensuring maternal safety. The ripple effects extend beyond his research—strengthening institutional capacity, supporting career development for junior colleagues, and expanding capacity for high quality PAS care across Utah. These concrete examples demonstrate the tangible benefits NIH funding brings to communities that legislators represent. The positive impact of this work in a conservative state like Utah serves as a fabulous example to engage lawmakers from across the political spectrum.

Dr. Einerson looks forward to contributing to WFRC's important work and helping secure the federal investment necessary to improve health outcomes for women across the country.

Legislative Activities

Update on Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations

On July 31, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved their version of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Labor-HHS appropriations bill. The bill can be found [here](#), the report [here](#), and the press release [here](#). The bill includes \$48.7 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and \$1,779,078,000 for the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). Notably, the bill does not adopt the proposed structural reforms included in the President's Budget Request.

Specifically for women's health research, the report includes \$106,480,000 for the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH), of which \$10 million is for the BIRCWH program. Notably, the bill included an amendment that prohibits the NIH from awarding multi-year grants unless the same number of grants are issued as FY 2024, and it includes language to prohibit the administration's proposed cuts to facilities and administrative (F&A) costs. The

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report also includes several of the WFRC's report language requests, including support for an NIH-wide effort on women's health research.

On September 10, the House Appropriations Committee approved their version of the FY 2026 Labor-HHS appropriations bill. The bill can be found [here](#) and the report [here](#). The bill includes \$47.845 billion for the NIH, and \$1.759 billion for NICHD. Similarly to the Senate version, the bill does not adopt the structural changes proposed in the President's Budget request, although it does include a note that the committee looks forward to working with the authorizing committees on any reforms to the NIH.

The report includes \$100,000 for ORWH and does not specifically include funding for the BIRCWH program. The bill and report are silent on the multi-year funding issue, and limits F&A costs to 30 percent. These policy issues will need to be worked out as the House and Senate conference their respective bills.

Despite efforts to fund the government for FY 2026, Congress could not reach an agreement on a short-term continuing resolution (CR) or final FY 2026 appropriations before the September 30 deadline. This lapse in appropriations triggered a government shutdown, and at this time, it's unclear when and how Congress will reopen the government.

Prior to the shutdown, the House passed a CR that ran through November 21 on a partisan basis. It would have funded the government at current levels for an additional seven weeks, giving Congress time to pass final FY 2026 appropriations bills. However, Senate Democrats who released their own version of a CR that ran through October 31 and addressed health care issues, including extending the Affordable Care Act subsidies and reversing the Medicaid cuts recently adopted in the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act*. This alternative failed in the Senate, as did the House-passed version, raising the chances for a government shutdown. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) has sent members home for recess until the Senate passes the CR that funds the government until November 21.

Activities needed for the safety and protection of property will continue during a shutdown. As we prepare for what may be a lengthy shutdown, here is important information about how Medicare and federal research programs will be affected by the shutdown. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a memo instructing federal agencies to prepare for reductions-in-force plans targeting employees who work for programs not legally required to continue or are not consistent with the administration's priorities. This direction differs from typical shutdown instructions and may be subject to a legal challenge should it be implemented.

At the NIH, both the intramural and extramural research programs will be affected by the shutdown, since employees supporting both programs will be furloughed. On the intramural side, the Clinical Center will continue ongoing activities to maintain safety and continue care; however, new patients will not be admitted. Intramural trials will stop accruing patients. Basic services to protect animals and maintain ongoing experiments and facilities will be supported on the intramural campus.

For those with extramural research funding, NIH released [information](#) for the community. Grantees who received awards prior to the shutdown can continue to draw down those grants except in instances where the award included restrictive terms and conditions. Researchers will not be able to contact their program officers with questions or access other support systems like the eRA Helpdesk.

New grant applications will not be processed during the shutdown; any applications submitted during the shutdown will not be processed until the government reopens, and NIH may recommend that applications submitted during the shutdown be resubmitted once the government is funded. No grant awards will be processed, and those processed prior to the shutdown with an award date of October 1 or later will not receive their Notice of Award until after the government reopens. NIH will be unable to conduct peer review meetings, or advisory council meetings. Web-based systems to support such meetings may also be unavailable until operations resume.

Grassroots Advocacy Toolkit

The WFRC put together a grassroots advocacy toolkit for members' to reach out to their members of Congress to urge them to support robust funding for the NIH. It is critical that members hear from their constituents about the impact of the administration's proposed cuts and its policies to delay or withhold funds would have on our members research. The toolkit provides resources on how to be an effective advocate, including tips on scheduling meetings and attending town halls, and a talking points document that specifically addresses the administration's proposed cuts to the NIH and what actions Congress can take to protect the funding.

Agency Activities

NIH Establishes Standardized Organoid Modeling Center

On September 25, the NIH [announced](#) the award of contracts for the launch of the Standardized Organoid Modeling (SOM) Center, which aims to produce standardized protocols for organoid research and reduce the reliance on animal modeling. The SOM Center will be housed at the NCI's Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research and will have contracts that total \$87 million for the first 3 years.

New National Cancer Institute Director Sworn In

Dr. Anthony Letai was [sworn in](#) as the 18th Director of the NCI on September 29. Dr. Letai is a cancer researcher and oncologist who previously served as a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and as a medical oncologist at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Agency Outreach

NICHD Outreach to ORWH Director

WFRC scheduled a meeting with ORWH Director Dr. Janine Clayton to discuss priorities for women's health research. The meeting had been scheduled for Friday, October 3; due to the government shutdown, we will reschedule for when the government reopens.

Funding Opportunities from NIH I/Cs

Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH) (K12 Clinical Trial Optional) ([RFA-OD-24-013](#))

Expiration date: May 29, 2026

Leveraging Network Infrastructure to Conduct Innovative Research for Women, Children, Pregnant and Lactating Women, and Persons with Disabilities ([UG3/UH3 - Clinical Trial Optional](#))

Expiration date: November 16, 2027

Mood and Psychosis Symptoms during the Menopause Transition ([R01 Clinical Trial Optional](#))

Expiration date: May 8, 2026

Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Advancing Research on Early Pregnancy Loss ([NOT-HD-22-026](#))

Expiration date: January 1, 2028