

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 13, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Jennifer Bastress Tahmasebi
Interim Agency Head
AmeriCorps
250 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20024

Dear President Trump and Ms. Tahmasebi:

Every year, nearly 200,000 AmeriCorps members serve across the country, including in our state of Massachusetts, helping our communities recover from disasters, close educational gaps, expand public health programs, and uplift our seniors and veterans. This work has made AmeriCorps one of the most beloved public service institutions in the country, and one that enjoys broad bipartisan support. It is also a model for cost-effective public-private partnership, as each dollar of federal spending in the program returns many multiples on the investment. Yet, last month, the Trump administration abruptly terminated nearly \$400 million in grants, demobilizing its members, and placing a majority of its staff on administrative leave. Now, the Trump administration has proposed ending AmeriCorps altogether in its Fiscal Year 2026 budget request.¹ We urge you to immediately halt and reverse this senseless and reckless dismantling of AmeriCorps and restore the federal government's widely supported commitment to national service.

AmeriCorps—officially the Corporation for National and Community Service or CNCS—was created in 1993 with a mission “to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.”² AmeriCorps members engage in national and community service through AmeriCorps programs that include Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), the National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC), AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps Seniors, the Volunteer Generation Fund, and other national service initiatives. AmeriCorps “brings out the best of America,” giving its members the opportunity to help provide critical community services including mentoring, tutoring, responding to disasters, assisting veterans, supporting students, delivering meals to seniors, and more.³ Studies show that

¹ Fiscal Year 2026 Discretionary Budget Request, WhiteHouse.gov (May 2, 2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Fiscal-Year-2026-Discretionary-Budget-Request.pdf>.

² About AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps, <https://americorps.gov/about> (last visited May 1, 2025).

³ America's Service Commissions, America's Service Commissions Statement on the Termination of AmeriCorps Grants (Apr. 26, 2024), https://www.statecommissions.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=342:asc-statement-on-the-termination-of-americorps-grants&catid=23:news&Itemid=191.

every federal dollar invested in AmeriCorps returns as much as \$34 in community impact.⁴ That is why, for the more than 30 years since AmeriCorps' inception, members from both sides of the aisle have stood to protect, strengthen, and expand it.⁵

In 2024, in our state of Massachusetts, 6,400 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers served at more than 800 locations, including schools, food banks, clinics, veterans' centers, and other community institutions.⁶ They advanced public health, educational equity, disaster response, and environmental stewardship. And through its unique public-private partnership, AmeriCorps and its partners generated more than \$24 million in outside resources from businesses, foundations, public agencies, and other sources in Massachusetts last year, strengthening community impact and increasing the return on taxpayer dollars.⁷

A national service model that works as well as AmeriCorps deserves commendation and support. Instead, a \$400 million cut will gut it. On April 15, 2025, without warning, the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) pulled from their projects more than 750 AmeriCorps NCCC members serving in more than 30 states.⁸ A day later, DOGE placed most of AmeriCorps' roughly 650 agency staff members on administrative leave, effective immediately.⁹ And just over a week later, DOGE directed the termination of nearly \$400 million in AmeriCorps grants, affecting more than 1,000 programs nationwide and prematurely ending the service of more than 32,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.¹⁰

Of the \$400 million in terminated grant funding, \$8 million would have gone to our state.¹¹ The cuts place at least 17 Massachusetts AmeriCorps programs at risk and would prematurely end the service of its 200 members. Across our state, these draconian cuts to AmeriCorps have suddenly stripped schools, shelters, and food banks of support on which they have come to rely. Organizations have been left scrambling to secure alternative funding or face the shuttering of essential initiatives. The cuts are derailing projects that help people, strengthen communities, and protect our planet. Simultaneously, public servants who have committed to AmeriCorps find themselves immediately without stipends, healthcare, or the opportunity to complete their service terms.

⁴ Return on Investment Study, AmeriCorps.gov (Jan. 2024), https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/document/ROI%20Economic%20Opportunity_01302024_final_508.pdf

⁵ 30 Years of Bipartisan Support for AmeriCorps in 30 Days, Voices for National Service (Dec. 19, 2023), <https://voicesforservice.org/news/voices-blog/30-years-of-bipartisan-support-for-americorps-in-30-days/>.

⁶ National Service in Massachusetts, AmeriCorps, <https://www.americorps.gov/national-service-report/ma> (last visited May 1, 2025).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ AmeriCorps NCCC Deployment Reports, AmeriCorps.gov (Apr. 11, 2025), <https://americorps.gov/serve/americorps/americorps-nccc/deployment-reports>

⁹ Gregory Korte, *Trump administration shuts down volunteer agency in latest DOGE takeover*, Boston Globe, (Apr. 17, 2025), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/04/17/business/trump-administration-shuts-down-volunteer-agency-latest-doge-takeover/>; Aishvarya Kavi, *DOGE Guts Agency That Organizes Community Service Programs*, N.Y. Times (Apr. 17, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/17/us/politics/doge-cost-americorps-community-service.html>.

¹⁰ Tobi Raji, *DOGE orders major cut to AmeriCorps funding, imperiling agency's work*, Wash. Post, (Apr. 25, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2025/04/25/americorps-grant-cuts-doge/>.

¹¹ Adam Bass, *17 'crucial' AmeriCorps programs in Mass. on the chopping block amid DOGE cuts*, MassLive (May 1, 2025), <https://www.masslive.com/news/2025/05/17-crucial-americorps-programs-in-mass-on-the-chopping-block-amid-doge-cuts.html>.

Across the state, for instance, these cuts will disrupt youth services. In Western Massachusetts, 27 AmeriCorps members serving with DIAL/SELF have been abruptly removed from their roles supporting low-income youth across Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties. As Executive Director of DIAL/SELF Youth & Community Services, Philip Ringwood said: “Asking members to give up on youth they are serving with only 2 months left in their term is a message to youth that they are not valued by this Administration.”

In the Greater Boston area, AmeriCorps members with Social Capital Inc. provided youth enrichment programming at Boys & Girls Clubs and community centers. President and Founder of Social Capital Inc., David Crowley said: “Suddenly terminating our AmeriCorps grant for no valid reason disrupts the youth programming we support and harms the relationships the AmeriCorps members have built with young people who look to them for mentoring.” He added: “Abruptly ending [AmeriCorps member] service leaves them with no source of income, causing serious financial challenges.”

In Framingham, the cuts will interfere with improving the school system by placing the AmeriCorps Teacher Residency program at risk of early termination, leaving teacher-residents without pay and unable to complete their university coursework. As Dr. Kelly Matthews, Director of the Framingham Teacher Residency (FTR) AmeriCorps Program, explained: “We have successfully created a pathway to diversify the teacher workforce in Massachusetts, thus enhancing the learning environment for students, and now that pathway is in jeopardy.”

In Boston, Walker’s Wellness Coach Project—one of the 17 AmeriCorps programs abruptly terminated in Massachusetts—supported 25 AmeriCorps members serving at 12 school- and community-based sites. These members provided behavioral health and wellness support to more than 200 young people. As Jake Murray, Chief External Affairs Officer at Walker Therapeutic & Educational Programs, noted: “The immediate loss of this program disrupts care for vulnerable youth and creates financial hardship for the members who relied on their stipends to meet basic living expenses.”

It is hardly surprising that, on April 29, 2025, some two dozen states filed suit against your administration alleging that the AmeriCorps cuts were unlawful and that you have illegally gutted the agency and reneged on its grants.¹² Instead of allowing this lawsuit to play out in the courts, you can do the right thing for AmeriCorps members and the people they serve right now, immediately reverse course, restore AmeriCorps grants and member and administrative staffing, and reaffirm our country’s commitment to national service.

To help us better understand what the Trump administration has done to AmeriCorps and what it intends to do going forward, we request written responses to the following questions by **May 20, 2025**:

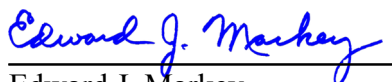
1. Please provide additional justification for the Fiscal Year 2026 budget proposal to end AmeriCorps altogether.

¹² Hannah Fingerhut, *AmeriCorps cuts prompt two dozen states to sue Trump administration*, AP (Apr. 29, 2025), <https://apnews.com/article/mericorps-lawsuit-trump-doge-efd7e461acc932beaa56c3e2c4fd927d>.

2. Will you stop and reverse the DOGE cuts to AmeriCorps and Massachusetts nationwide?
3. What criteria did DOGE use to determine which AmeriCorps grants to terminate, which members to demobilize, and which staff to place on administrative leave? What role did AmeriCorps leadership play in these decisions?
4. What is the status of AmeriCorps grants that were not terminated, members not demobilized, and staff not placed on administrative leave?
5. We understand that neither State Service Commissions—such as the Massachusetts Service Alliance—nor local stakeholders were consulted prior to or following the grant terminations, member demobilizations, and placement of staff on administrative leave. Who was consulted for these decisions? Are there any plans to consult with the Commissions?
6. Does AmeriCorps intend to address the loss of stipends, health coverage, education awards, and other benefits for the more than 32,000 AmeriCorps members and Seniors volunteers whose service was cut short? If so, how? If not, why not?

Cuts to the AmeriCorps program threaten not only the continued operation of national service programs, but also the stability of community-based initiatives that deliver critical services to communities across Massachusetts and the nation. On behalf of our constituents, we urge you to restore AmeriCorps grant funding, member service, and administrative staff immediately.

Sincerely,



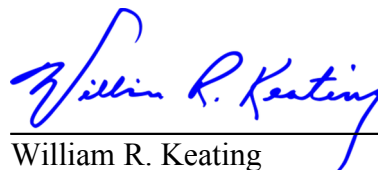
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



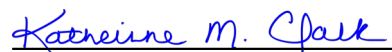
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



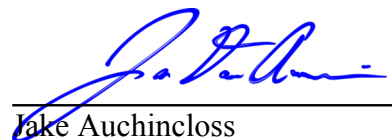
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Katherine M. Clark
Member of Congress



Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress