



OVPR statement on how faculty can best advocate on issues

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The University of Michigan's Office of Federal Relations serves as the institution's "voice" in Washington, D.C., and it is our responsibility to engage with the state's congressional delegation.

We are also registered to lobby on behalf of U-M, which is an important distinction when it comes to advocacy efforts before the U.S. Congress. Executive officers, deans, senior directors, federal relations staff, and designated faculty or staff are individuals authorized to lobby on behalf of the university.

Lobbying activities include:

Contacts (in person, written or by phone) with covered executive branch and legislative branch officials made on behalf of the University of Michigan regarding the creation of legislation; existing legislative proposals; rules; regulations; executive orders; programs, policies or positions of the government; administration or execution of federal programs or policies (including federal contracts and grants – grants officers are not covered executive branch officials); and, nomination or confirmation of a person for a position subject to confirmation by the Senate; preparation time.

It is not considered a lobbying activity if you respond to a request for public comment in the Federal Register or were asked by a Member of Congress or Congressional Committee to testify or respond to a request for information.

However, we rely on faculty across campus to inform our efforts and share specific impacts to U-M, something we are not able to accomplish without your partnership. In this constantly evolving environment, please do not hesitate to reach out to our team via email at UM.FedRel@umich.edu so we can assist with any advocacy efforts.

Aside from the Office of Federal Relations, there are also opportunities to engage in advocacy efforts through relevant organizations, including those at both the regional and national levels. In many cases, these organizations will provide talking points to explain how funding issues related to federal research would impact research and innovation.

Please see below for a few tips:

- We ask U-M employees to coordinate advocacy with our office so that we can be clear, consistent and in compliance with federal reporting requirements.
- When engaging in professional society contacts with the federal government, be careful not to speak on behalf of the university unless coordinated with our office. Do not sign letters on behalf of the university or use U-M letterhead for such contacts.
- Nothing prevents university employees from expressing personal views on personal time with personal resources.
- The ultimate goal of advocacy is to ensure lawmakers understand the role of sustained research funding, and our team will work with you to tailor that message.

The guidance above can be found at the [Federal Funding Updates - U-M Research](#) site under March 2025, *How can I best advocate for issues that are important to the research enterprise?* and on the [U-M Government Relations webpage on Federal Lobbying and Gift Rules](#).