

Week of May 18, 2026

Dear Addiction Science Defense Network,

Press attention to Addiction Science Under Siege

Last week ASDN released its one year report card on the Trump administration's policies that impact addiction science and public health. The Huff Post headline was based on the report's contents and interviews with 3 of its authors. [Report: Trump Administration Has Cut Back On Necessary Addiction Research And Services | HuffPost Life](#)

And read more coverage in Gov Exec: [This will cost lives': Researchers slam Trump cuts to addiction programs and staffing](#)

ASDN 6-Part Briefing Series: Register for the last two sessions

June 4 | 2:00-3:30pm ET

PART V: The Importance of Community Engaged Research to Reduce Substance Use and Promote Community Well-Being

The session will focus on the essential role that community involvement plays in advancing research related to substance use prevention, intervention, and recovery. Drawing on diverse expertise, speakers will highlight how engaging communities not only enhances the relevance and effectiveness of research but also ensures that policies and interventions are culturally responsive and sustainable. [Register here.](#)

June 17 | 2:00-3:30pm ET

Part VI – The Aftermath: A Whole of Society Approach to Substance Use

This session will feature a foremost authority from Alberta Canada who is transforming systems and mindsets through an understanding of how lifelong health is determined by more than just our genes: early life experiences change our brains in ways that make us more or less vulnerable to health problems in adulthood. A science-based roadmap will be presented for improving our physical and mental health, reducing vulnerability to addiction, and addressing related health problems across the lifespan. [Register here.](#)

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: CADCA's Budget Analysis.

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) advocates for better funding and programming in the drug prevention field. Sue Thau, CADCA's legislative consultant, has just released a very informative overview of the Trump administration's dramatic plans to reorganize, downsize and eliminate prevention research and practice programs across the federal government. If you are worried about where things are

going in the next year, take some anxiety meds and take a look (https://www.youtube.com/live/4IWdG_wzZvl).

DOGE THE BULLET Dept. Remember when DOGE tore through the federal agencies faster than a speeding bullet to save America from waste, fraud and abuse? Well, it looks like what the DOGE boys were doing was illegal, according to a court decision favoring the plaintiffs, who argued that their grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities should not have been cancelled because the executive branch "has no constitutional authority to block, amend, subvert, or delay spending appropriations based on the president's own policy preferences." Judge Colleen McMahon wrote that the termination of grants to the groups was "in violation of the First Amendment, in violation of the equal protection component of the Fifth Amendment, and without statutory authority." McMahon said that DOGE officials lacked the statutory authority to carry out the grant terminations, and prohibited the administration from enforcing the terminations. The decision noted that DOGE staff acknowledged they did not examine any applications or underlying materials when determining which grants to flag, and they used ChatGPT to help come up with rationales for why the grants should be terminated on diversity, equity and inclusion-related grounds. The Judge wrote that the DOGE staff leading the effort were in their 20s and "did not have much experience in anything at all — certainly not in anything remotely related to the humanities." See: [Federal judge finds DOGE's elimination of humanities grants "unlawful"](#)

KASH COWED Dept. [House Democrats are demanding FBI Director Kash Patel prove he has no drinking problem](#) Kash Patel's drinking behavior continues to be audited by Congress, both literally and figuratively. House Democrats are demanding the FBI Director prove he has no drinking problem by having him take the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) at a public hearing under oath. This is a novel use of a test developed for clinical use by the World Health Organization with partial support from NIAAA. Much has been written about the reliability and validity of the AUDIT, but it has never been evaluated under conditions where the respondent is being cowed with threats of perjury, potential job removal or contempt of Congress. Addiction science had had extensive experience with the investigation of the reliability and validity of screening and diagnostic tests because of the belief that people with major alcohol problems are in "denial" about their drinking and therefore will be reluctant to answer truthfully or accurately when asked about their drinking. At a time when national security concerns have been raised about the drinking behavior of three cabinet officials in the Trump administration, this does not seem to be a good time to cut the budget of NIAAA.

Got Something to Share?

We're always looking to highlight the great work happening across our network! If you have **announcements, articles, reports, or anything else relevant to addiction science and practice** that is worth sharing, we'd love to feature it in the ASDN Weekly Update. Your insights and

enthusiasm are vital in shaping the future of ASDN—please connect with [Tom Babor](#) to share your work and learn how you can get involved.