

U.S. cuts another \$60 million in grants to Harvard University over protests against genocide



Boston, May 20 (RHC)-- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has said it is terminating \$60 million in federal grants to Harvard University, further escalating an ongoing feud between the Ivy League institute and President Donald Trump's administration over alleged anti-Semitism, presidential control and the limits of academic freedom.

"Due to Harvard University's continued failure to address anti-Semitic harassment and race discrimination, HHS is terminating multiple multi-year grant awards – totalling approximately \$60 million over their full duration," the department said on X on Monday. It said discrimination will "not be tolerated" on campus, adding that "federal funds must support institutions that protect all students."

Education Department Secretary Linda McMahon also announced earlier this month that the university would no longer be receiving public funding for research as it had made a "mockery" of higher education, in a letter addressed to Harvard.

"Harvard will cease to be a publicly funded institution, and can instead operate as a privately-funded institution, drawing on its colossal endowment, and raising money from its large base of wealthy alumni," McMahon wrote in the letter.

Harvard has sued the administration in response, alleging that the funding freeze violates the First Amendment and federal law, which bars the president from directly or indirectly ordering the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to conduct or terminate an audit or investigation.

Harvard President Alan Garber announced last week that the university will use \$250 million of its own funds to support research. The feud between the president and Harvard – a prestigious Ivy League campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts – began in March, when Trump sought to impose new rules and regulations on top schools across the country that had played host to pro-Palestinian protests over the past year.

Trump has called such protests “illegal” and accused participants of anti-Semitism. But student protest leaders have described their actions as a peaceful response to Israel’s war in Gaza, which has elicited concerns about human rights abuses, including genocide.

The Trump administration announced the first funding freeze in April. Harvard had rejected the administration’s series of demands to tackle alleged anti-Semitism, saying they would subject it to undue government control. The demands had included revamping its disciplinary system, eliminating its diversity initiatives and agreeing to an external audit of programmes deemed anti-Semitic by the administration.

Trump and prominent conservatives in the U.S. have also long accused Harvard and other universities of propagating extreme left-wing views and stifling right-wing perspectives.

[SOURCE: AL JAZEERA and NEWS AGENCIES]

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