



American Parents Coalition

June 17, 2026

The Honorable Brian Babin
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Babin,

I write on behalf of American Parents Coalition and parents who are alarmed by what a federally funded institution, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), is promoting to children across the country. NASEM was originally chartered by Congress in 1863 under President Abraham Lincoln to advance America's scientific and STEM capabilities.¹ Unfortunately, NASEM has strayed far from that mission. The organization has transformed itself into a platform for pushing radical political agendas into K–12 classrooms across America.

NASEM receives hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding every year. In 2024, the Department of Transportation (DOT) alone provided \$84 million in contracts and grants to NASEM, making DOT its single largest federal contributor.² These are taxpayer dollars entrusted to an institution whose stated mandate is to provide independent, nonpartisan scientific guidance. Instead, NASEM has funneled resources toward left-wing advocacy organizations that push explicitly political agendas onto students and publicly share resources filled with extreme political ideology.

According to a report compiled by American Parents Coalition,³ NASEM has funded organizations promoting a specific climate agenda and so-called "environmental justice" curricula in K–12 schools. One NASEM-funded organization, EcoRise, distributes lesson plans for elementary, middle, and high school students in which students "discover how they can help dismantle and counteract damage caused by systemic racism."⁴ Another beneficiary, the Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation (CELF), explicitly recruits kids into climate advocacy campaigns.

NASEM's political agenda extends well beyond climate. The organization has also become an instrument for distributing gender ideology into schools. As documented by American Parents Coalition, NASEM has hosted workshops with American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) providers who publicly advocate for irreversible transgender medical interventions for kids, and suggest hiding critical information from parents about their child's feelings or beliefs relating to their gender.⁵ Specifically, NASEM's 2023 workshop "Supporting the Health and Well-Being of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth" encouraged schools to use "affirming pronouns" and to validate students' self-declared gender identities, even when parents object or refuse to do so.^{6,7}

Last year, NASEM published "Equity in K–12 STEM Education: Framing Decisions for the Future,"⁸ a report laced with racially and ideologically charged rhetoric. Rather than charting

a course to elevate American scientific achievement, the report frames the entire U.S. educational system as a mechanism of systemic oppression. It breaks STEM education into five ideological "frames," including "learning and using STEM to promote justice" and "envisioning sustainable futures through STEM." Teaching children that STEM's primary purpose is social justice.⁸

NASEM's obsession with subverting American education and institutions with radical gender ideology, DEI, and climate alarmism raises serious concerns. President Trump's Executive Order 14168, "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism," prohibits the use of federal funds to "promote gender ideology."⁹ Executive Order 14151 terminates DEI programs and preferencing across all federal grant-making.¹⁰ Executive Order 14173 requires every federal grant recipient to certify it does not operate any programs promoting DEI that violate applicable federal anti-discrimination laws.¹¹ NASEM's workshops, curricula partnerships, and DEI-framed publications appear to be in direct conflict with each of these directives.

NASEM's inappropriate politicization of the U.S. legal system has also captured the attention of several of your colleagues. Just recently, Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) sent a letter¹² to the Federal Judicial Center (FJC) highlighting NASEM's role in pushing far-left climate agendas in resources that advise federal legal proceedings. In question was the "Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence," which exists to aid judges' scientific understanding when relevant to legal proceedings. NASEM worked with the FJC to co-author and co-publish the latest edition, which included a chapter replete with unsubstantiated climate alarmism that the FJC later quietly removed. NASEM, however, still offers the full resource on its website.

Congressman Eric Burlison, joined by ten House colleagues, also raised serious concerns about NASEM's political actions. In a letter¹³ to Department of Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy and Office of Management and Budget Director Russ Vought the Members requested an investigation into NASEM's federal funding, conflicts of interest, and misuse of taxpayer dollars. OMB Director Vought has indicated he will investigate. We are grateful for that leadership and urge Members of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology to investigate NASEM's federal funding.

America cannot afford to lose the next generation of scientists and engineers to an organization more interested in political transformation than scientific excellence. The children sitting in classrooms today will determine whether America leads or falls behind in an increasingly competitive global landscape. They deserve real science, real mentorship, and an institution worthy of the public's trust. NASEM, in its current form, is not that institution.

Thank you for your commitment to protecting American children and families.

Sincerely,

Alleigh Marré

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Executive Director, American Parents Coalition

Footnotes

- 1 Lincoln Charters the National Academy of Sciences, 1863. David J. Kent, March 3, 2023. <https://davidjkent-writer.com/2023/03/03/lincoln-charters-the-national-academy-of-sciences-1863/>
- 2 Letter from Rep. Eric Burlison et al. to Secretary Sean Duffy and Director Russ Vought, May 4, 2026, p. 6. ("In 2024, the Department of Transportation (DOT) provided \$84 million in contracts or grants to NASEM and is its largest federal contributor.") <https://burlison.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/burlison.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/letter-to-secretary-duffy-and-director-vought.pdf>
- 3 American Parents Coalition, NASEM Report, April 2026. As reported by Fox News Digital, April 21, 2026: <https://www.foxnews.com/media/nonprofit-network-takes-hundreds-millions-federal-funds-pushing-wokeness-advocacy-group-warns>
- 4 EcoRise, "Introduction to Environmental Justice," <https://www.ecorise.org/our-work/curriculum/intro-to-ej/> ("Students will take a close look at leaders and events that helped form the EJ movement and discuss how they can help dismantle/counteract damage caused by systemic racism.")
- 5 American Parents Coalition, "APC Letter to Congress re: American Academy of Pediatrics," May 2026, p. 3. ("The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, another federally funded institution, has hosted workshops with AAP providers who publicly support transgender medical interventions for kids, and even promoted the idea that schools should validate children's gender identity when their own parents refuse to do so.") <https://americanparentscoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/AAP-Letter-to-Congress.pdf>
- 6 Fox News Digital, April 21, 2026. NASEM's 2023 workshop "Supporting the Health and Well-Being of Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth" encouraged the use of "affirming pronouns" as a way to make gender diverse youth "feel respected" in a classroom setting. <https://www.foxnews.com/media/nonprofit-network-takes-hundreds-millions-federal-funds-pushing-wokeness-advocacy-group-warns>
- 7 American Parents Coalition, "The Lookout: National Academies," April 21, 2026. <https://americanparentscoalition.org/the-lookout-national-academies/>
- 8 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, "Equity in K–12 STEM Education: Framing Decisions for the Future" (2025). <https://www.nationalacademies.org/publications/26859>
- 9 Executive Order 14168, "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government," January 20, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>
- 10 Executive Order 14151, "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing," January 20, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-radical-and-wasteful-government-dei-programs-and-preferencing/>
- 11 Executive Order 14173, "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity," January 21, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/ending-illegal-discrimination-and-restoring-merit-based-opportunity/>
- 12 Letter from Senators Ted Cruz, Mike Lee, Marsha Blackburn, and Eric Schmitt to FJC Director Judge Robin Rosenberg, April 15, 2026. ("Instead of serving as a neutral and objective resource for federal judges and staff, it read as if it were a plaintiff brief in a climate lawfare suit.") <https://www.lee.senate.gov/2026/4/lee-colleagues-urge-federal-judicial-center-to-retract-climate-agenda-materials>
- 13 Letter from Rep. Burlison et al. to Secretary Duffy and Director Vought, May 4, 2026. (Documenting that chapter authors had direct financial ties to Sher Edling, a law firm representing plaintiffs in climate change litigation against fossil fuel companies.) <https://burlison.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/burlison.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/letter-to-secretary-duffy-and-director-vought.pdf>