
Geographic and Political Patterns in Terminated NSF Grant Funding

Evidence from North Carolina and the East Coast

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STA 199L

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Introduction

This topic explores how National Science Foundation (NSF) grants are distributed across political, geographic, and institutional contexts, with a focus on North Carolina and the broader East Coast.

It aims to understand whether patterns in funding terminations are linked to factors like congressional district affiliation, regional research resources (Research Triangle vs non-Triangle), or political dynamics.

Our project does not aim to influence political opinions, but simply aims to observe existing trends.

Data



nsf_terminations

This data was originally collected using crowdsourcing of National Science Foundation administrators and researchers to gather information on grant terminations under the Trump administration.

Grant Watch

tidytuesday | April 2025

Noam Ross & Scott Delaney

Description of Observations

org_district (the congressional district where the project is located)

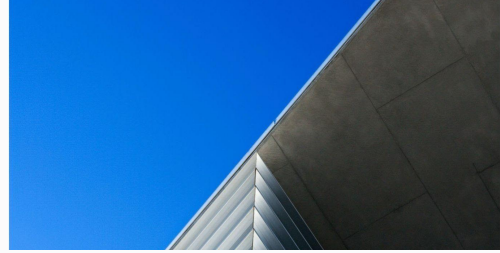
usaspending_obligated (the amount of money committed by NSF)

Ethical Concerns

crowdsourcing - vulnerable to misinformation or bias against Trump administration

patterns of targeting - less funding for states/districts that voted against

Analysis Questions



Main Question

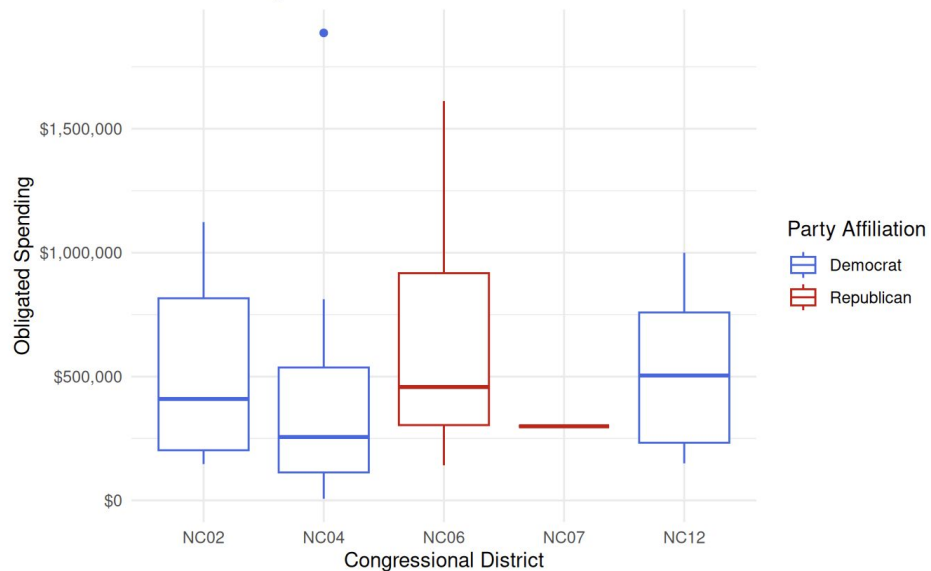
- What is the relationship between the value of terminated grants and the congressional district that grants are contained within? Is there an observable increase/decrease in terminated grant money between congressional districts?

Additional Questions

- Is there more spending obligated to terminated projects within the research triangle compared to outside of it?
- How do the data trends observed in North Carolina compare to regional and national trends?

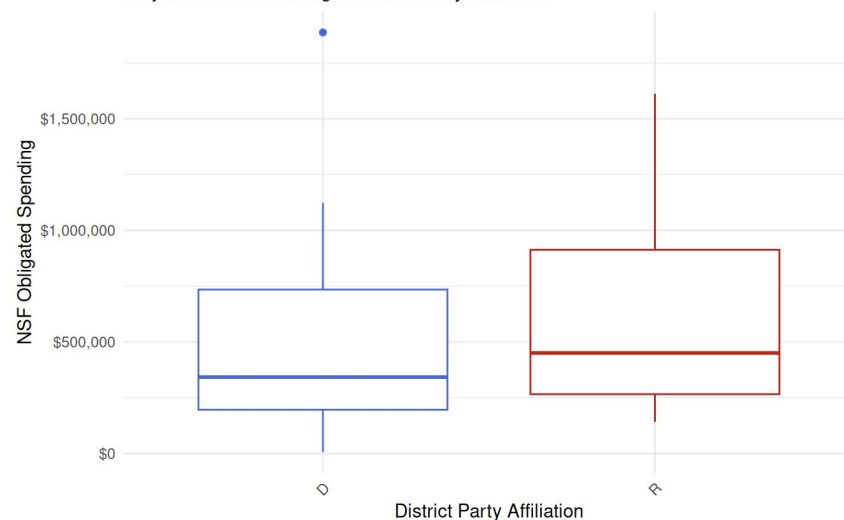
NSF Grant Terminations for NC projects Across Congressional Districts

Obligated Spending to Projects with Terminated Grants
Across NC Congressional Districts



Source: Ballotpedia

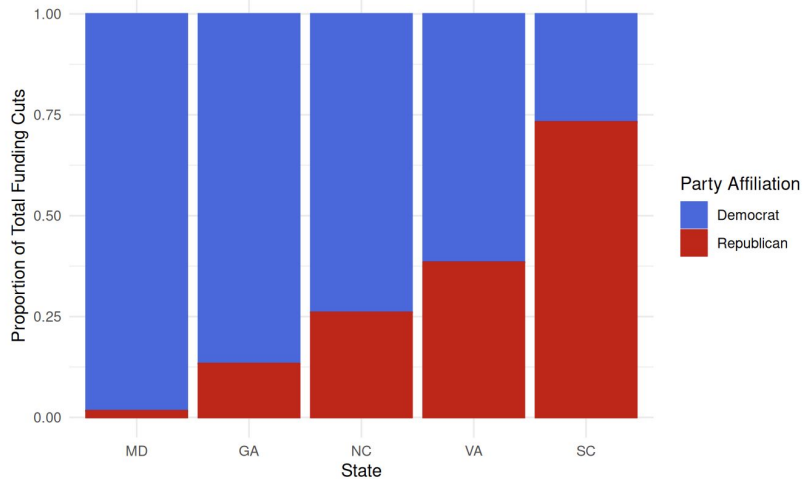
Obligated Spending to Terminated Grants
Projects in NC According to District Party Affiliation



Source: Ballotpedia

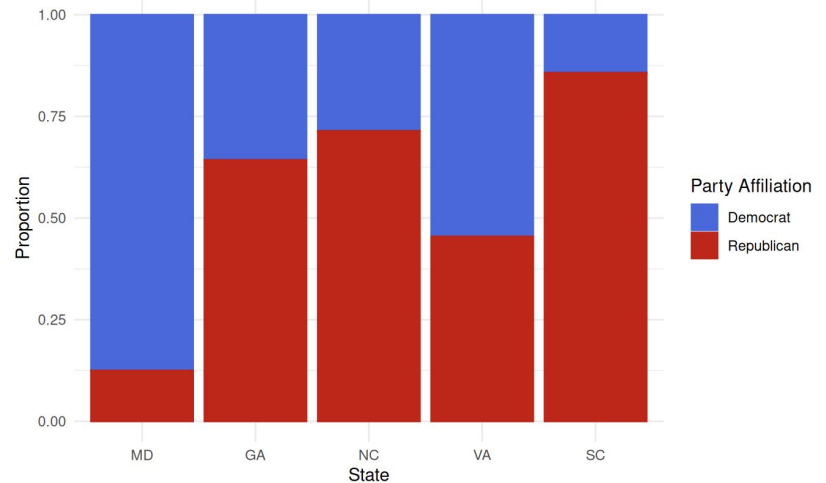
Proportional Funding Cuts by District Party Affiliation Across East Coast States

Funding Cuts by Party Affiliation of Congressional District of Project
In States on the East Coast



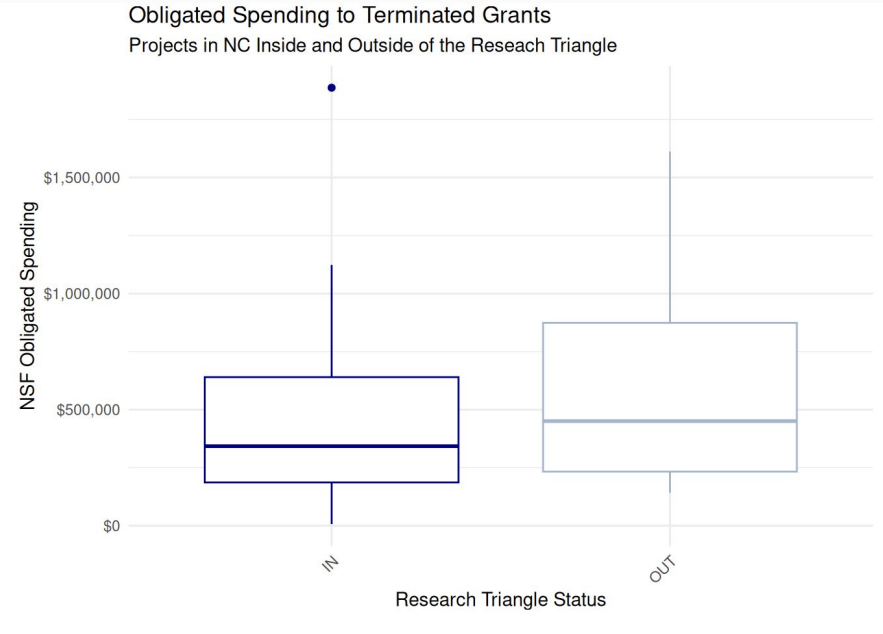
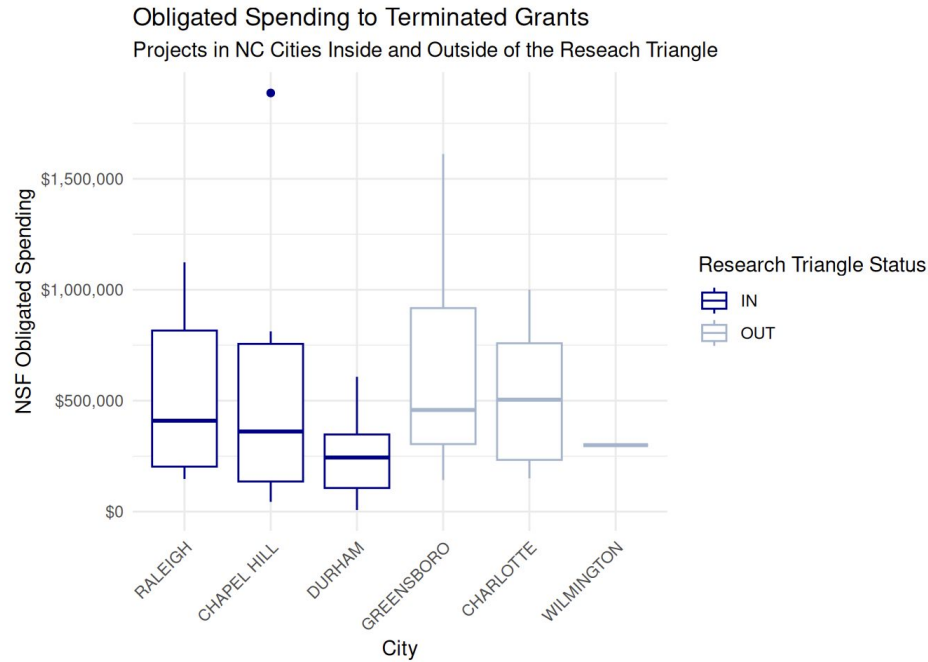
Source: Ballotpedia

Party Affiliation of Congressional Districts
In States on the East Coast

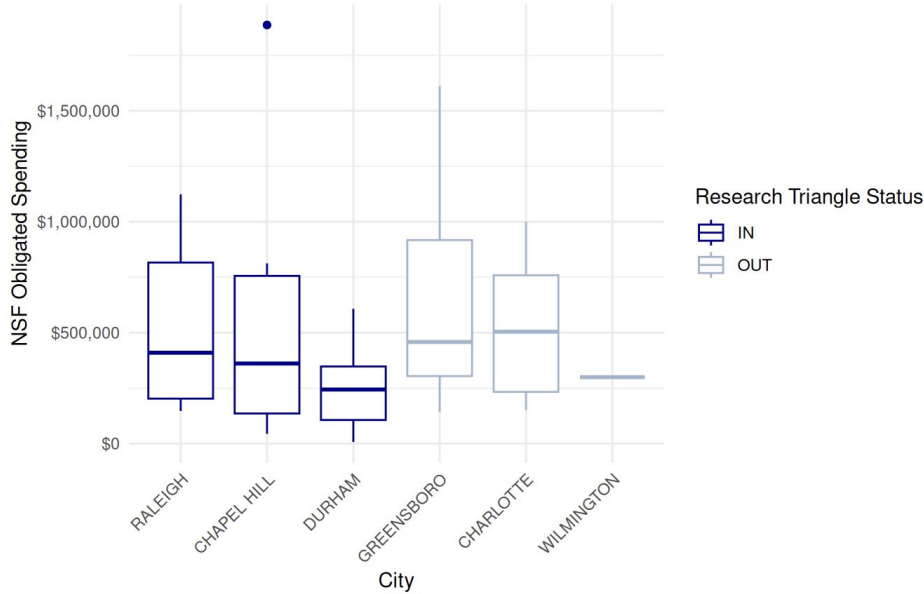


Source: Ballotpedia

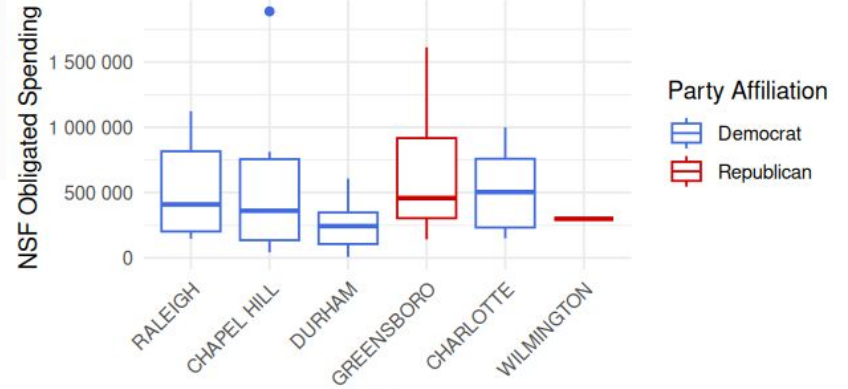
NSF Grant Terminations for NC projects Within and Outside the Research Triangle



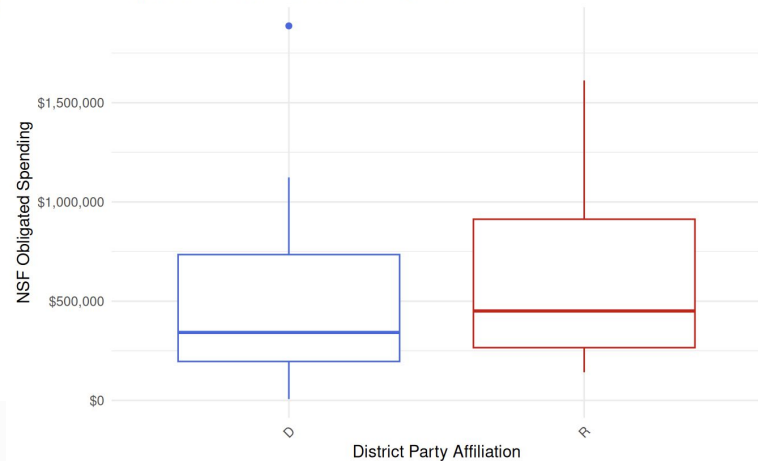
Obligated Spending to Terminated Grants
Projects in NC Cities Inside and Outside of the Research Triangle



Obligated Spending To Terminated Grants
Projects in NC Cities by Congressional District Party Affiliation



Obligated Spending to Terminated Grants
Projects in NC According to District Party Affiliation



Conclusions + Discussion

- Slightly higher grant terminations were observed in Republican-affiliated congressional districts within NC
- The largest total funding losses from terminated grants across nearby East Coast states occurred in Democratic-affiliated districts
- Projects located outside the Research Triangle experienced slightly higher losses of NSF grant money, on average

Future Directions

- Incorporate statistical modeling
- Compare districts with major research universities to those without
- Observe how terminations changed over time before and during the Trump administration