

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

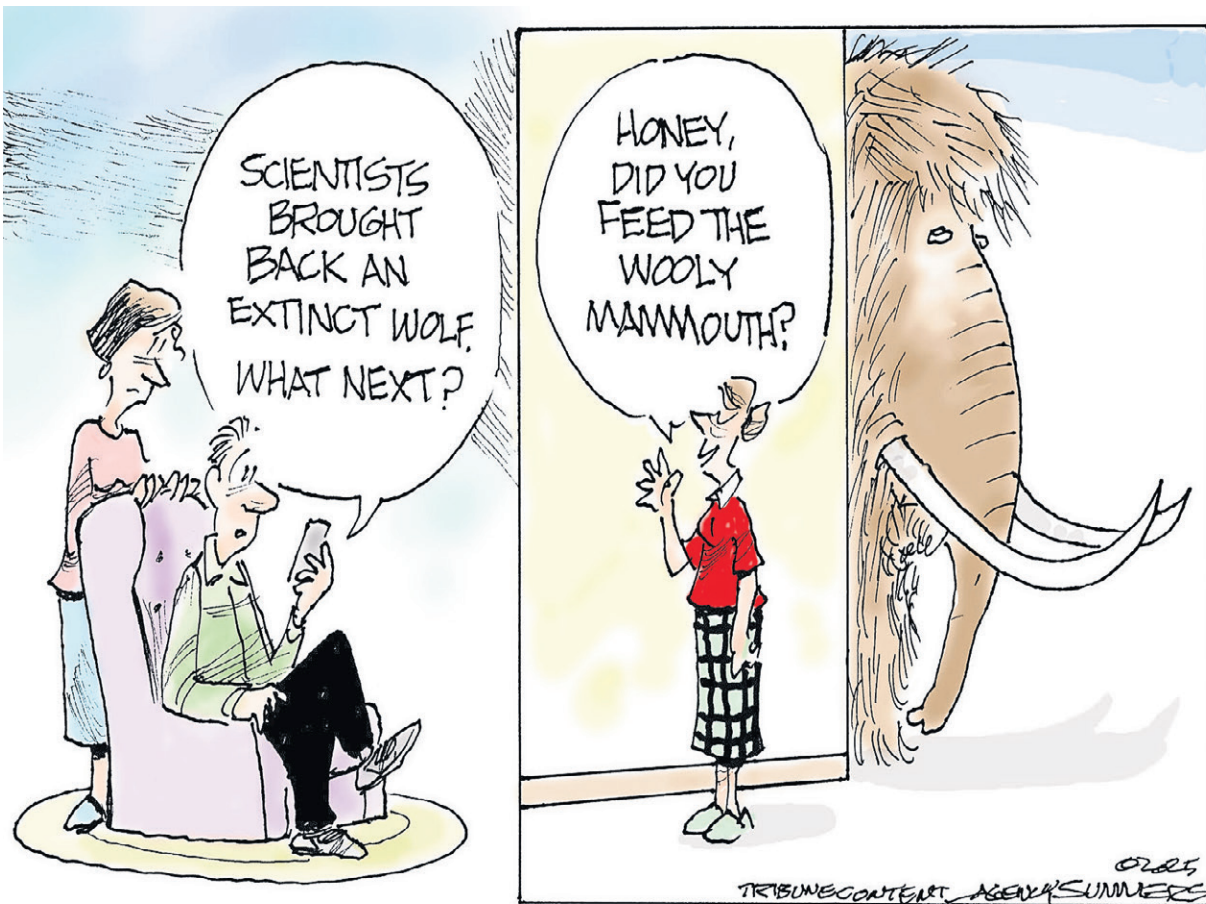
## The Paducah Sun

Edwin J. Paxton, Editor & Publisher, 1900-1961  
Frank Paxton, Publisher, 1961-1972  
Edwin J. Paxton Jr., Editor, 1961-1977  
Jack Paxton, Editor, 1977-1985  
Jim Paxton, Editor, 1986-2000  
Fred Paxton, Publisher, 1972-2000  
Jim Paxton, Editor & Publisher, 2000-2018

William L. Evans, Jr., Publisher  
Perry Boxx, Executive Editor  
Leanne Fuller, Editor

### WRITE TO US

The Paducah Sun welcomes letters for readers. Published letters must include a daytime phone number, signature and address. All are subject to editing for clarity and brevity. Writers should limit letters to a maximum of 300 words; shorter letters are preferred. Letters may be mailed to Viewpoints, The Paducah Sun, 408 Kentucky Ave., Paducah, KY 42002-2300. Writers are limited to one letter per month. Writers may email letters to [tburgess@paducahsun.com](mailto:tburgess@paducahsun.com).



# That was then, this is now

"Those are my principles, and if you don't like them ... well, I have others."-Groucho Marx

Guess who said this: "China takes total advantage of the United States. They steal our intellectual property using cyber theft. Not only do they steal our intellectual property, they keep our good companies out, and say the only way you're going to be able to sell your American products in China ... is if you come to China, make them there, and give us the techniques and intellectual property."

Elon Musk? Nope. President Trump? Wrong again. That was then-Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) in a 2018 radio interview. On another occasion that same year, Schumer said: "I'm closer to him (Trump) on trade than I was to either Obama, a Democrat, or Bush, a Republican, because we've got to get tougher on China. ... But the president and his team have to stick with it, be strong, and not sell out for a temporary purchase of goods without addressing the real issue: the theft of American intellectual property which will cost us millions of American jobs in the long run."

How about this one: "In terms of tariffs, it's interesting to note that the average MFN (most favored nation) tariff for Chinese goods coming into the United States is two percent, whereas the average MFN tariff on U.S. goods going to China is 35 percent. Is that reciprocal?"

Same list of choices? Wrong again. That was Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) in 1996.

One more: "It's also proper for advanced economies like the United States to insist on reciprocity from nations like China."

That was President Barack Obama speaking in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2018.

What changed and caused many Democrats who previously favored tariffs to now excoriate Trump over the tariff policies they once supported? Why, politics, of course.



CAL THOMAS

Politicians can change positions faster than they can change lanes. On Wednesday, the president announced a 90-day "pause" in his implementation of tariffs. China was the lone exception as the trade war with that communist country continues.

The stock market reacted swiftly. The Dow Jones Industrial Averages immediately jumped by 2,500 points. NASDAQ rose 10 percent. The Dow is still 2,000 points under where it was when Trump first announced his tariff regime, but the market's quick response should calm especially retirees with modest investments in their 401k accounts.

Some financial analysts believe Trump has the upper hand with China as that country's economy is anything but strong. China's leaders don't want to lose face with the U.S. and if President Xi Jinping mishandles this war his leadership could be threatened.

President Trump might consider a nationally televised address in which he would explain in simple terms his goals and how all of this will play out.

So far all this razzle-dazzle hasn't resulted in any foreign nations, especially members of the European Union, reducing or dropping their tariffs against U.S. products. They appear to be waiting to see what develops. They are not alone.

Readers may email Cal Thomas at [tcaeditors@tribpub.com](mailto:tcaeditors@tribpub.com). Look for Cal Thomas' latest book "A Watchman in the Night: What I've Seen Over 50 Years Reporting on America" (HumanixBooks).

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## DOGE's cuts threaten Kentucky's cultural heartbeat

How would you feel if someone took your child's favorite book out of his hands?

What would you think if your local museum wasn't important enough to keep its doors open?

If someone said, "Sorry we can't help your community recover from a natural disaster" would you feel sad, outraged, lost?

For more than 53 years, Kentucky Humanities has helped communities across Kentucky celebrate what makes them unique and vital. We have been there for you and with you, connecting you to your neighbors, promoting your unique history, inspiring the next generation, championing what makes your town or city special.

But right now, we can't. And we are angry about it. You should be too.



BILL GOODMAN  
KENTUCKY HUMANITIES  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In 2022, we assisted libraries, historical societies, artisan centers, radio stations, community centers, and cultural institutions in navigating a disaster like what we are experiencing right now, an historic flood. We requested and received emergency grant funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and poured every dime back into places that were devastated by flood waters because it is our mission to help Kentucky communities thrive. We wanted then, and want now, to be part of the rebuilding of Kentucky's communities ravaged by

flooding, but we can't. Why? Because at the federal level, DOGE has targeted the NEH and terminated Kentucky Humanities' operating grant and any emergency funding sources that previously allowed us to provide aid in the Commonwealth.

We are sorry, but most of all we are angry because you and us — we — are the ones looking out for Kentucky and all Kentuckians.

If you're angry, too, please contact our elected officials and insist they support continued funding of the NEH and Kentucky Humanities. Together, our voices can make a difference.

Bill Goodman is the executive director of Kentucky Humanities. To learn more about Kentucky Humanities, visit [kyhumanities.org](http://kyhumanities.org).

## University funding should be reformed, not reduced

BY THE BLOOMBERG EDITORIAL BOARD

Six months before World War II ended in Europe, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote a letter to his top science adviser. Could the wealth of technical knowledge developed for combat, he asked, spur the peacetime economy and improve public health? The resulting treatise, presented to Congress in 1945, established the nation's commitment to funding university research.

Today, the federal government covers more than half of universities' R&D spending, much of which flows through the National Institutes of Health. The agency spent more than \$35 billion on almost 50,000 grants in 2023. NIH-funded research has supported lifesaving innovations from the hepatitis B vaccine and cancer therapies to MRI scans and gene-editing technology.

According to the current White House, drastic changes are needed to this system. Too much federal money is being wasted on "facilities and administration," officials say, when it should be supporting research directly. Their basic criticism isn't crazy. But their proposed solution threatens to impede essential scientific research without achieving its stated goals.

NIH grants are divided into direct and indirect costs. The former are

expenses tied to a specific project, such as equipment and materials. The latter might include costs shared across various grant proposals — utilities at a lab, for example — but also expenses such as administrator salaries. The average so-called indirect cost rate, negotiated by universities and federal officials, has risen to 39% from a uniform 8% in the 1950s. At some schools, it's more than 65%. (In practice, this means a \$1 million grant is awarded an additional \$650,000 for overhead.) More than a quarter of NIH funding dollars went toward indirect costs last year.

Some of the expenses covered by indirect costs are critical for the advancement of science. Clerical staff and IT workers, parking lots and paint jobs — all can qualify as indirect costs. At some universities, meanwhile, administrators have started to outnumber faculty.

Sorting out essential expenses from administrative bloat isn't easy. The painstaking rate negotiations between universities and the federal government attempt to do so, but they more often bog down the process and encourage school officials to inflate their needs. In theory, a flat rate would curb this perverse incentive, simplify the process, save money and thus free up funding for direct costs. (President Barack Obama's administration

considered a similar idea in 2012.) Better yet, a tiered system of flat rates would address discrepancies in costs by geography and type of research — an oft-cited reason for individualized rates.

It's possible the administration had some version of this in mind when it proposed cutting the indirect rate to 15% last month, citing the standard for philanthropic grants. If so, it should've announced the policy in tandem with a commitment from Congress to increase funding and speed up the review process. (To qualify for grants, universities must show they're compliant with dozens of rules.) Such a plan, gradually phased in to minimize chaos, might've resulted in a more prudent and transparent allocation of taxpayer funds.

Instead, by issuing so-called supplemental guidance, the White House circumvented Congress, which opposed a similar proposal in 2017. The administration

has since been sued by 22 states and the cuts have been blocked. (The administration intends to appeal.) Universities, some of which stand to lose tens of millions of dollars annually, are preemptively reducing staff and putting clinical trials on hold. Suffice it to say, this isn't the way to encourage American innovation.

A flat rate for indirect costs is a reasonable way to contain overhead and ensure that taxpayer funds support core research. But getting the details right, as any scientist will tell you, is essential. If it wants to ensure the U.S. remains the world's leader in cutting-edge research, the administration should withdraw this heedless guidance and try again.

The Bloomberg Editorial Board publishes the views of the editors across a range of national and global affairs.

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