

FROM THE FRONT

“If it’s your job to eat a frog, it’s best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it’s your job to eat two frogs, it’s best to eat the biggest one first”

MARK TWAIN AMERICAN WRITER

Proposed FAIR model a focus of recent lobbying trip

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funding of research administrative costs. McInnis’ ongoing lobbying efforts have been a focus of her presidency since President Donald Trump took office.

“I was there for 22 hours last week,” McInnis said in an interview on March 31. “Flew down late one night, had meetings all day and then flew back late that same night.”

During her trip, McInnis said she met with “a variety of senators and members of the House of Representatives.” McInnis added that she does not “usually like to say which lawmakers we meet with” and that the recent trip included meetings with lawmakers who were “generally receptive.”

“The big topic on the table,” McInnis said, “relates to facilities and administrative costs, or the things that are sometimes called indirect costs.”

The Trump administration has slashed funding from several of Yale’s academic peers while making policy demands. The federal government has not taken similarly targeted action against Yale — something that McInnis denied credit for in February — though Yale researchers have been impacted by sweeping federal funding cuts. Yale spent \$1.2 million on lobbying in 2025, more than doubling the amount the University spent before Trump began his second term.

“The last 15 months, I think, has taught all of us in higher education the importance of listening broadly to the American people, listening to the criticisms of those who think we can be working on things and doing a better job,” McInnis said in the interview last week. “So I’d say the main lesson I have learned is we need to listen and ask ourselves, ‘Where are there areas that we believe we should be working to improve?’”

McInnis said the University has “long had support from many lawmakers” and that members of Connecticut’s congressional delegation “are among those champions” in Congress for Yale and higher education.

“Schools like Yale have opened doors for generations of students,” Senator Richard Blumenthal LAW ’73, a Connecticut Democrat, wrote to the News. “We are lucky to have so many incredible institutions of learning in Connecticut, including Yale, and I count their leaders as my most valuable partners in fighting to make college more accessible and affordable to students and to invest in their success.”

In February 2025, the National Institutes of Health proposed a blanket cap to indirect cost rates of 15 percent, “in lieu of a separately negotiated rate for indirect costs in every grant,” the agency’s notice read.

The cap was a substantial decrease from Yale’s negotiated rates for indirect costs, as high as about 70 percent. Indirect costs include a university building’s utilities, lab maintenance and administrative functions.

McInnis — who spoke out against the proposed cap last February — said that, when the cuts were proposed, “at the root of that was the sense that American taxpayers don’t understand how that money is spent.”

She said the goal of the FAIR model was to have a “considerably more transparent” system.

Several organizations — including the Association of American Universities, on whose board of directors McInnis sits — came together to form a group to develop a new model in response to the cuts. The Joint Associations Group on Indirect Costs is made up by experts including former government officials and university administrators.



During a visit to Washington, D.C., last month, Yale President Laurie McInnis said she focused on advocating for a proposed new model to increase transparency in federal research funding.

The group developed the model and proposed FAIR as a replacement for the current reimbursement system that uses negotiated rates for individual universities.

The FAIR model splits research costs into three categories, separating the costs currently categorized as indirect into two buckets. One of those buckets would include costs specific to each research project, and the other would cover institution-wide operational costs necessary for research, according to an Association of American Universities web-page about the proposed model.

McInnis said she plans to pay another visit to Washington later

this month for a meeting with the association, and added she will probably spend an afternoon on Capitol Hill during that trip.

McInnis said that the concerns she encounters when meeting with members of Congress “vary wildly.”

The top three issues that come up, she said, “are also the top three that come up in polling with the American people: cost, access and is it a place that truly welcomes all viewpoints?”

In October 2025, Pew Research reported that an increasing percentage of Americans believe higher education is trending in the wrong direction.

The University announced in January that Yale College would offer free tuition to families earning under \$200,000 annually.

McInnis has praised the Yale-adjacent Buckley Institute, which bills itself as “a home for enlightened conservative thought,” and met in March with student leaders of the Yale Political Union, an organization that hosts debate among its politically varied parties.

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Yionoulis tapped as drama dean



In July, Yionoulis, who previously taught at the David Geffen School of Drama and directed shows at the Yale Repertory Theatre, will return to Yale after a stint as dean of the drama division at Juilliard.

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a teacher, is incredibly meaningful for me,” Yionoulis wrote in a statement provided to the News by University Spokesperson Karen Peart.

Bundy, who has been the dean of the drama school since 2003, wrote in an email to the News that he has known Yionoulis for over three decades.

“Evan Yionoulis is a brilliant artist, teacher, and field leader,” Bundy wrote. “I am confident she will bring extraordinary focus, spirit, and invention to her role as Dean and Artistic Director.”

Yionoulis made significant contributions within the drama division at Juilliard, according to the announcement. In 2024, Yionoulis transitioned Juilliard’s master’s program in acting into a tuition-free model. She also established a teacher development fellowship program that provided mentorship and development support to aspiring acting, dance and vocal performance teachers.

As part of Bundy’s efforts to make Yale’s drama school more financially accessible, in 2021, it became tuition-free as a result of a

\$150 million donation from entertainment mogul David Geffen.

While serving as a dean at Juilliard, Yionoulis also taught in the drama division.

Before going to Juilliard, Yionoulis worked in the faculty at Yale for two decades, according to her profile on the Juilliard website. She was a professor of acting and directing.

“Having worked for her at the start of my career as a teaching assistant, I know she will be a superb guide to our faculty and staff, and an inspiration to students in every discipline of the theater,” Bundy added.

Yionoulis, a graduate of Yale’s directing program, served as the chair of acting at the drama school for five years beginning in 1998. In that role, Yionoulis grew the curriculum and faculty size of the school’s acting department.

As an undergraduate at Yale, Yionoulis studied literature and theater studies. She participated in the Yale Dramatic Association and was a member of Saybrook College.

Bundy, who has been the longest-serving dean at the drama school, will retire from that post at the end of the academic year but

will continue teaching at the Geffen School and within Yale College.

Nancy Yao, the assistant dean of student life at the drama school, said in a phone interview that Bundy is an “exceptional” artist and colleague.

“It was really hard for me to imagine who could follow in those footsteps,” she said. “I understand that there were many amazing candidates, and I think that’s really the biggest testament to his legacy is that others wanted to continue and saw it as a place that they wanted to be.”

Yao said she is looking forward to Yionoulis’ tenure because the incoming dean is someone who has attended both Yale College and the drama school and has experience in a leadership position at a “comparable institution.”

“I’m really excited for the new dean to make her mark,” Yao said.

The David Geffen School of Drama was renamed in 2021 following the gift by the David Geffen Foundation. It was originally called the Yale School of Drama.

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At YPU, activist calls for younger leaders

David Hogg was a survivor of the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, a co-founder of the March for Our Lives movement and more recently a vice chair of the Democratic National Committee until last June. On Tuesday evening, Hogg spoke at the Yale Political Union in favor of the resolution “Resolved: No Country for Old Men.”

Hogg, an upstart 25-year-old in the Democratic Party, wasted little time getting specific in his speech. Hogg argued against what he characterized as a status quo of gerontocracy.

“Our generation does not have representation in Congress,” Hogg said.

Hogg gained prominence following his advocacy as a survivor of the 2018 shooting in Parkland, Florida. Hogg left the DNC after facing criticism for trying to back his own group, Leaders We Deserve, as a challenge to Democratic incumbents.

“We need people in government who are there to properly represent their constituents,” Hogg said. “In America, we don’t have kings.”

Hogg set some limitations on his argument. He explicitly rejected age quotes and dismissed age-based term limits, adding that these would be ill-advised fixes that would make the system even more corrupt.

In his opinion, the best solutions would include overturning the Supreme Court’s ruling in Citizens United, paying elected officials more and barring members of Congress from owning stocks for the rest of their lives.

Hogg also invoked leaders such as former President Lyndon Johnson. Johnson entered politics young, and his willingness to sacrifice Democratic support in the South to enact the Civil Rights Act, Hogg argued, showed the leadership of someone with decades of experience from starting off young.

After Hogg spoke, Fernanda Ribeiro Wambier ’29 argued against the resolution. She contended that there was an intrinsic value in perspectives shaped by lives lived outside of political culture.

“When I think of great politicians, I think of people who have sacrificed for their country,” she said, “but I also think of people who have the mentality to think of certain ideas others may not have.”

Aidan Wong ’29 argued against the resolution, using an international lens to contend that gerontocracy is a symptom of political instability and not its cause.

This resolution, “No Country for Old Men,” passed 65 to 25.

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Hogg, a former vice chair of the Democratic National Committee, argued that an aging Congress is failing young Americans, and the resolution “No Country for Old Men” passed at the Yale Political Union.