

Additional funding is needed to fight the Zika virus

Our idea: EXPIRED FEDERAL GRANTS

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has over **\$651 million** in expired grant accounts as of September 30, 2015 according to the Government Accountability Office¹.

A significant portion of the expired grant funds might be eligible for Zika research.

Expired grants are those beyond a project's end date but not yet officially closed by the federal government due to delays by either the grantee or the awarding agency.

Grants are supposed to be closed within one year after an agency receives and accepts a grantee's final report(s). **\$243 million** in HHS grants are still open **3+ years** after the projects ended.

Until grant accounts are closed, the unspent funds remain in HHS' Payment Management System—unavailable for other projects.

HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell or President Obama could make a strong case for moving these idle funds to Zika efforts through administrative action.

Use it or lose it. These funds will be returned to the U.S. Treasury if they're not used elsewhere.

No Congressional action is required. No additional cost to the taxpayers.

HOW?

Step 1: Secretary Burwell, or the President, needs to issue a mandate directing HHS staff to (1) expedite the closure of the expired grants and (2) shift eligible funds to Zika research.

Step 2: Assemble a task force of grant managers (10-12 minimum) focused entirely on closing expired grants and reallocating unspent funds.

Step 3: Ignore the "it'll never work" crowd. **Make it happen.**

Thoughts? Have a better idea? Share it! [#FederalReforms](#) Tweet us [@thegrantdoctors](#) or post your suggestions on our Facebook page: [facebook.com/thegrantdoctors](#)

¹ *Grants Management: Actions Needed to Address Persistent Grant Closeout Timeliness and Undisbursed Balance Issues*, GAO-16-362, April 14, 2016.