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NIH scientists sue to keep drug stocks

Washington, DC, Apr. 21 (UPI) -- National Institutes of Health scientists have hired drug-firm lawyers to fight new rules that would sever their financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

The move may already be having the desired effect: aides to NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni are already reconsidering the government agency's strict new policy requiring employees to divest themselves of all industry-related stocks by October, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday.

A group of researchers calling themselves the Assembly of Scientists sent a message to employees this week saying they had "mounted a legal and government relations campaign to challenge the new conflict-of-interest rules."

Arent Fox, the Washington law firm orchestrating the move, is a longtime representative of the drug industry and pays the NIH scientists as consultants.

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