

It's **EASY**

Engage & Advocate for Science Yourself

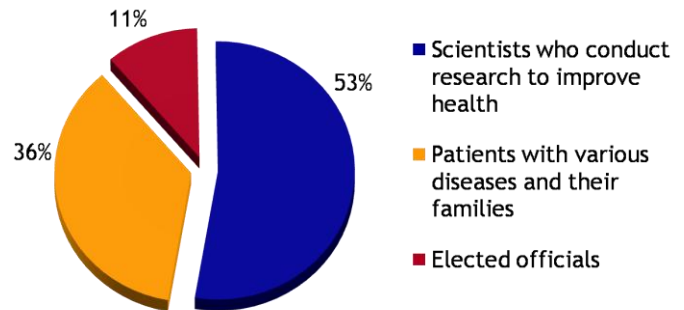
Why me?

Advocating for research is as vital to advancing science as any discovery in the laboratory. Your voice is the strongest influence on how lawmakers and the general public view the importance of research. According to a recent poll of the U.S. public, scientists should have the most influence over research funding.

“Though perhaps they are not well understood, scientists are highly respected in our society. They are also highly credible. **When they speak with a unified voice, the people listen.**”

- The Hon. John E. Porter, chair, Research!America

Which one of the following do you feel should have the most influence on how government funds for research to improve health are spent?



Source: *Your Congress - Your Health Survey*, March 2011
Charlton Research Company for Research!America

Why now?

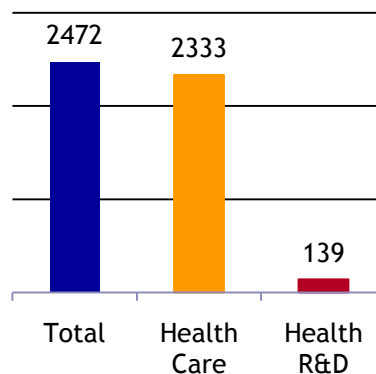
Despite the economic and societal impact of research, the fiscal year (FY) 2011 budget saw significant cuts to funding for research-oriented agencies. The National Institutes of Health budget was cut by nearly \$300 million; the National Science Foundation by \$60 million; the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality by \$25 million; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by \$820M. With deficit reduction a priority as Congress and the administration debate the **FY2012 budget**, there is no doubt that funding for health and medical research is at serious risk.

Aside from funding decisions, Congress also often engages in debate on research-related issues, including:

- Stem cell research
- Comparative effectiveness research
- Tax incentives for R&D
- Patent reform
- STEM education
- Animal research

*Source: NIH Data Book; Research!America 2009 Investment in U.S. Health Research

U.S. Health Expenditures (2009, in billions*)



Congress needs scientific voices

In the House, only **4 of the 435** voting members have a PhD in a science discipline.

In the Senate, **0 of the 100** members have a PhD in a science discipline.

You can be **1** of the scientific voices to speak up.

How do I advocate?

Engage with Congress

Learn about your members of Congress

Find out where your representatives stand on the issues important to health and medical research so that you can then thank them for their support, help persuade, or provide further information.

It's EASY: Ask your representatives to complete the *Your Congress-Your Health* questionnaire at www.yourcongressyourhealth.org.

Meet with a member of Congress or their staff

Call, email or fax your representatives' DC or state offices. Ask to schedule a meeting to discuss a particular issue or share a specific concern. You can ask your representative to cosponsor a piece of legislation, sign a letter to congressional leadership or the President, support a specific funding level for a federal agency or program, or talk about an issue important to your community.

It's EASY: Take a look at Porter's Principles, a guide to contacting Congress, available at www.researchamerica.org/advocacy_resources.

Attend a town hall meeting

Ask a question, voice a concern, or speak to your representative personally about research.

It's EASY: Use Research!America publications like our Investment in U.S. Health Research report (www.researchamerica.org/research_investment) or our one-page fact sheets on specific health topics (www.researchamerica.org/issue_briefs) to help refine your messages.

Reach out to the Public

Introduce your community to research

Give tours of your research facility, mentor local students, or partner with museums, libraries and community centers.

It's EASY: Use Research Takes Cents (www.researchamerica.org/research_cents) to put research funding in perspective for the general public.

Involve the media

Write an op-ed or letter to the editor, or propose a story on your research. Your institution's PR or communications office can help.

It's EASY: A sample letter to the editor is available at www.researchamerica.org/sample_lte.

Get involved with Research!America

Join our advocacy network

Research!America has a grassroots network of thousands. As part of our group, you'll receive occasional advocacy alerts that notify you about crucial legislation in the works, and you'll have an opportunity to quickly and easily send messages to Congress.

It's EASY: Sign up today at www.researchamerica.org/advocacy.

Join New Voices for Research

This initiative is specifically for early-career scientists who want to develop their understanding of policy issues, as well as their communication and advocacy skills.

It's EASY: Visit newvoicesforresearch.blogspot.com for more information.



“If I had to do it over again, I would have spent more time on the Hill in Washington ... more time in lawmakers' offices, more time writing op-ed articles, more time talking to general audiences – more time in the public square.”
- Nobel laureate J. Michael Bishop, MD

