



May 24, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
2306 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey,

On behalf of Research!America, I am writing to express concern regarding the Fiscal Year 2019 302(b) allocation for the Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor-H).

As the nation’s largest nonprofit alliance committed to elevating medical and public health progress to a higher national priority, Research!America is grateful for your leadership and respective roles in securing increased funding in FY18 for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and other key health and science agencies. We recognize the commitment and determination that was required to lift the FY18 and FY19 budget caps and meaningfully grow these agency budgets. Your hard work is already translating into life and cost-saving efforts, including meaningful progress in the development of a universal flu vaccine, the launch of the historic “All of Us” million-participant research project, and rapid response to the re-emergence of two deadly viruses: Ebola and Nipah.

It is in that context that we ask you to reconsider the very different course the House is charting in FY19 by allocating flat funding to Labor-H.

Health threats like Alzheimer’s, cancer, sickle cell anemia, muscular dystrophy, stroke and health-care acquired infections rob people of hope, independence and time. As we have seen again and again with medical and public health advances, if we can prevent, delay, minimize and ultimately end these threats, the dramatic, quantitative and qualitative returns to our nation will continue to accrue for generations.

241 18th Street South  
Suite 501  
Arlington, VA 22202

P 703.739.2577

F 703.739.2372

E [info@researchamerica.org](mailto:info@researchamerica.org)

The same holds true for global pandemics and epidemics. These catastrophic, high mortality threats pose ever-present health and economic risks, but overwhelmingly lack effective and preventive counter-measures. According to a national public opinion survey Research!America and the American Society for Microbiology (ASM) recently commissioned, 93% of Americans believe it is important for the U.S. to be a global leader in research to improve health, and 89% believe it is important for the federal government to fund international programs on the surveillance and detection of infectious disease outbreaks.

Given these realities, we firmly believe it runs counter to the national interest in both quantitative and qualitative terms to create a “Rob Peter to pay Paul” formula for funding NIH, CDC, AHRQ, and other health research agencies. As the appropriations process continues, we ask that you reconsider the priority assigned to Labor-H and help influence final funding levels that empower, rather than immobilize, our nation’s medical and public health research agencies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Woolley".

Mary Woolley