



Testimony of Research!America to the Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Concerning Fiscal Year 2021 Appropriations for FDA
Submitted for the Record, April 2, 2020

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Research!America appreciates the Subcommittee's stewardship over funding for such critical federal agencies as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Research!America alliance advocates for science, discovery, and innovation to achieve better health for all and we hope the comments below prove useful as you allocate funding for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21). We urge you to provide at least \$3.278 billion in non-user fee funding to FDA in FY21, an increase of \$108 million over FY20.

The ever-increasing list of public health responsibilities that FDA fulfills directly affects the health and safety of Americans. Overall, FDA oversees more than \$2.6 trillion in products, which account for 20 percent of annual spending by U.S. consumers. In 2019, FDA once again demonstrated a solid commitment to evaluating the safety and effectiveness of new products in as efficient a manner as possible, approving 48 novel drugs, 44% of which treat rare or orphan diseases. FDA is working collaboratively with patients, academic researchers and industry to responsibly speed the review of medical advances, knowing that any unnecessary delay squanders health and time. The need for efficient and nimble review of new medical products and therapies has been on full display during the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. FDA's role is too important, across a myriad of American priorities, for inadequate federal support.

Increased funding for FDA will allow the agency to continue to facilitate delivery of novel approaches to data management including artificial intelligence; foster development of safe medical devices; ensure our food is safe for individuals and families across the U.S.; make the vaccine supply more robust, secure, and nimble to combat seasonal epidemics and potential pandemics like COVID-19; and work closely with stakeholders to ensure that patients receive the highest quality therapies and drugs when they need them.

Additional resources would also support FDA's role in tackling other national health priorities such as combating Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, a treatment-elusive threat that affects more than 5.5 million Americans; confronting the escalating use of e-cigarettes by our nation's youth; overcoming the virulent and deadly opioid epidemic; and addressing

antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a major public health threat that is depleting the supply of effective antibiotics.

Americans recognize that our nation cannot afford to retreat in the face of these and other health threats. Since 1992, Research!America has commissioned national and state-level surveys to gauge public sentiment on issues related to research and innovation. According to a national survey we commissioned in 2020, more than 80% of Americans are concerned that antibiotic resistance will make more infections difficult or impossible to treat. FDA is responsible for ensuring new antibiotics actually deliver on their potential – that they are safe and effective against the infections they target. Our survey also found that 4 in 5 Americans agree that opioid abuse and addiction is a major problem in their community. We cannot win the battle against AMR or the opioid crisis unless FDA has the resources necessary to both meet this responsibility and so do with the level of urgency threats of this magnitude demand. This is just one of many examples in which public sentiment and reality are aligned in justifying boosted investment in FDA.

Given FDA’s growing portfolio of responsibilities that bear on the health, safety, and wellbeing of the American people, we believe the Subcommittee would be advancing the best interests of our nation by supplying FDA with \$3.278 billion in annual discretionary funding.

I thank you and your respective staffs for your hard work, your leadership in funding FDA, and for considering Research!America’s views.

Sincerely,

Mary Woolley
President and CEO
Research!America