

## **STATEMENT BY RESEARCH!AMERICA PRESIDENT AND CEO MARY WOOLLEY ON RECENT HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION**

Research!America is grateful for the efforts of three of the House Appropriations subcommittees which approved Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 funding this week, including for agencies which lead the government's role in medical and health research absolutely critical to improving and saving the lives of patients. The Subcommittees (Labor, HHS, and Education; Commerce, Justice, Science; and Agriculture-FDA) collectively fund NIH, CDC, AHRQ, BARDA, FDA, and NSF, agencies which form the backbone of federal investment in the U.S. medical and health research ecosystem as well as our ongoing response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic.

Each subcommittee labored under challenging circumstances to prioritize these agencies and tried to provide the additional funding needed to combat COVID-19 and honor enduring U.S. priorities. However, FY21 appropriations are being held hostage to a non-defense discretionary budget cap dramatically out of step with the investment our nation now desperately needs. This outdated cap stymies our nation's ability to adequately address and apply the lessons of COVID-19, take the steps necessary to fully restore COVID-eroded research, and boldly strengthen our national commitment to research and public health going forward.

There is an option, proposed by appropriations leaders from both sides of the aisle, that responds to the harsh realities of COVID-19 in a straightforward, strategic manner: adjust the non-defense discretionary budget cap to exclude federal programs and agencies anchored in the COVID-19 response, so these agencies can advance both their ongoing missions and their COVID-19-related responsibilities – not one or the other.

Our nation and its people deserve this kind of approach, one that honors the need to defeat COVID-19 as well as other deadly threats like Alzheimer's, cancer, and sickle cell anemia.

We call on Congressional leaders and the President to remove the obsolete, pre-COVID budget caps so we can build our nation's post-COVID future with investments in NIH, CDC, AHRQ, BARDA, FDA and NSF as if our national security, economic competitiveness, and individual health depend upon it -- because they do.

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