WARNING: Failure to be an advocate can be hazardous to your research career
What’s the Urgency? Research is at Risk

- Arbitrary, across-the-board 10-year cuts, known as sequestration, will devastate U.S. science and prevention efforts
- House Appropriations funding allocations for FY14 would cut NIH and CDC almost 20% more
- Brain drain from U.S. is escalating
- Few elected officials are comfortable talking about research
IOM/NRC Report on Priorities for Gun Violence Research

- High-priority research areas:
  - Characteristics of gun violence
  - Risk and protective factors
  - Prevention and other interventions
  - Gun safety technology
  - Influence of video games and other media

- Commissioned by the CDC and CDC Foundation
“To me, firearms and guns is nothing CDC should be involved in. It has nothing to do with health. Health has to do with diseases.”

Scientists Should Have Most Influence over Research Funding

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

- Scientists who conduct research to improve health: 48%
- Patients with various diseases and their families: 23%
- Elected officials: 9%
- Not sure: 21%

Source: A Research!America poll of likely voters conducted in partnership with JZ Analytics in August 2012.
“...public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed.”

President Abraham Lincoln
Research!America Poll Data

- Commissioning public opinion polls on research issues for more than 21 years:
  - National Polls
  - State-Based Polls
  - Issue-Specific Polls
- Telephone (random-digit dialing) polls are conducted with a sample size of 800-1000 adults (age 18+) and a maximum theoretical sampling error of +/- 3.5%. Data are demographically representative of adult U.S. residents (state or national).
- Online polls are conducted with a sample size of 1000-2000 adults and sampling error of +/-3.1%. The data are weighted in two stages to ensure accurate representation of the U.S. adult population.
85% Say They’re Concerned About Misuse of Medication

How concerned are you that prescription pain medication can be abused or misused?

- Very concerned: 42%
- Somewhat concerned: 9%
- Not at all concerned: 6%
- Not sure: 43%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in March 2013.
Nearly Even Split on Government Role in Behavioral Research

Which of the following comes closer to your opinion?

- 40%: The government has no role in funding or conducting behavioral research since there is an individual choice.
- 41%: Society bears much of the cost of unhealthy behavioral choices so it is valuable for the government to be involved in research to address it.
- 19%: Not sure

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with JZ Analytics in December 2012.
Do you think there is value in conducting research to better understand and prevent injury and violence caused by preventable accidents, deliberate acts or neglect?

- **60%** Yes
- **23%** Not sure
- **17%** No

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in May 2013.
Opinions Split on Whether Gov. Should Fund Prevention Research

Do you think government should fund research to prevent violence and injury caused by preventable accidents, deliberate acts or neglect?

- Yes: 40%
- No: 23%
- Not sure: 38%

Source: A Research!America poll of U.S. adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics in May 2013.
What Can You Do?

- Tell your story; help convert “don’t know” population to become supporters of research
- Call top congressional leaders and the president; organize colleagues and friends to do the same
- Stay connected to your Member of Congress and urge others to follow suit
- Work to keep the value of research in the media
  - Write a letter to the editor or op-ed
  - Use social media
A Challenge: Pass the Starbucks Test
Localized Communications: Georgia and Virginia
Then, Now, Imagine

**THEN...** In 1921, 24 people died in motor vehicle accidents for each 100 million miles traveled.

**NOW...** In 2003, Americans drove 52 times more miles than in 1921, but the death rate had dropped to 1.5.

**IMAGINE...** Preventing all motor vehicle deaths.

Photos by Wikipedia (top) and net_efekt (via Flickr);
Source: Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety.
Communications from Public Health Figures

Americans depend on a strong CDC

By FORMER CDC DIRECTORS | 11/27/12 9:50 PM EST

Letter to the Editor

The sequester is about more than the Defense Department

The Post has done a great job covering the devastating impact of the sequester on the Defense Department and its contractors [“D-Day for the Pentagon?” editorial, Jan. 31]. Why has it done so much less about the impact on the other (a.k.a. non-defense, discretionary) half of the sequester? Those of us who work with government partners and contractors in the Department of Health and Human Services or the Education Department, for example, are equally concerned. Frankly, cuts to these types of programs might have more of an effect on our nation’s long-term health and prosperity than will the proposed cuts to the military.

Some equal time to covering the impact of all the cuts, not just defense, is warranted. I urge you to tell that story soon, while the potential to avoid the sequester is still real.

Michael R. Fraser, Cheverly
Remember the most important four words a researcher can say and convey:
“I work for you.”
Connect With Us

www.researchamerica.org/blog
www.researchamerica.org/facebook
www.twitter.com/researchamerica
www.youtube.com/researchamerica