



January 30, 2017

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The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leaders McConnell, Pelosi, and Schumer:

On behalf of Research!America, the nation's largest not-for-profit public education and advocacy alliance working to bolster our nation's response to deadly and disabling health threats, I am writing to urge you to deploy Fiscal Year 2017 and 2018 funding against health threats that rob Americans of health, hope, autonomy, and time.

The new Congress and new administration have the power to secure Americans' health and prosperity for years to come. Our children and grandchildren could be spared the tragedy of losing loved ones to cancer, to rare diseases like Huntington's and ALS, to anorexia nervosa, to Lupus. Our nation could prevent Alzheimer's and other chronic conditions from creating a fiscal tsunami that threatens our nation's economic security. We can fight harder and work faster to help wounded warriors facing PTSD or Traumatic Brain Injury.

The voice of the American people, divided as it may seem, is united in wanting faster medical progress. In fact, based on a survey Research!America recently commissioned, more than half of Americans -- Republican and Democrat alike -- would pay a dollar more in taxes each week if they knew it was being devoted to medical research. Members of the 114th Congress acted boldly to honoring American priorities under your leadership, along with that of then Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV): not only did they pass the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act on a broadly bipartisan basis, but they passed House and Senate appropriations measures for FY17 that included robust funding increases for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (\$2 billion and \$1.25 billion, respectively). It is this type of vision, focus, and determination that will empower America to break the boundaries of current science and find answers for insidious health threats.

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Unfortunately, some members of Congress and outside groups have suggested abandoning the FY17 appropriations process for NIH and other key research agencies in favor of a Continuing Resolution (CR) that tethers these agencies to funding levels established in 2015.

We urge you not to acquiesce to the status quo, and instead make this Congress the one that will not permit a future in which cancer kills children, Alzheimer's robs older Americans of their independence, and PTSD chains veterans to debilitating symptoms. We are confident that under your leadership, the 115th Congress can complete the FY17 appropriations process in a manner that bolsters the resources available to NIH, CDC, FDA, NSF, AHRQ and other key research agencies so they can do their part to break the boundaries of science and save precious lives.

We feel strongly that if you take that step, and reinforce it with "302(b)" allocations for FY18 that assign priority to these key agencies, the returns to America and Americans -- health, economic, and fiscal -- will not just supersede, but dwarf, that investment.

Thank you and your respective staff members for your commitment and diligence, and for considering our views.

Sincerely,

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

Mary Woolley  
President and CEO