



March 3, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Chairman Cole, Ranking Member Murray, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Members of the Senate and House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies,

On behalf of Research!America, the nation's largest not-for-profit education and advocacy alliance working to accelerate medical progress and strengthen our nation's public health system, we appreciate the complexity of the funding decisions that fall under the jurisdiction of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-H) Subcommittee and are grateful for your demonstrated commitment to advancing the nation's best interests. As you consider fiscal year 2017 (FY17) appropriations, we ask that you take the following requests into consideration.

Because of your vision and commitment, the FY16 Omnibus Appropriations bill increased the budget of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by 6 percent or \$2 billion. This increase was key to begin to restore lost purchasing power and rebuild a solid foundation for sustained progress. While there is bipartisan commitment to continue this robust upward trend, without the passage of FY17 appropriations bills, NIH will suffer flat funding this year, slowing and even halting progress against deadly diseases and conditions. We cannot be subservient to the status quo.

To get U.S. leadership and our scientific capacity back on track, we believe it is vital to increase annual discretionary funding for NIH by \$2 billion in FY18 over FY17 levels, and to supplement that increase by releasing the FY18 funding included in the 21st Century Cures Act to support targeted national research initiatives. Research!America believes this powerful infusion of funds is merited by the magnitude of our

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health challenges, the tangible and intangible costs of inaction, and the extraordinary return on medical progress.

Alzheimer's, cancer, lupus, arthritis, diabetes, ALS and a host of other diseases -- some prevalent and others rare -- must be stopped. Our nation cannot afford the trillions of tax dollars these illnesses drain from our coffers as they wreak havoc on the lives of patients and their loved ones. Medical research delivers economic and health benefits to Americans and populations throughout the world that endure and redouble; knowledge gained now becomes the foundation for further progress. We firmly believe our nation has been grossly underinvesting relative to the compelling need for, and benefits of, medical progress. It is time to recalibrate.

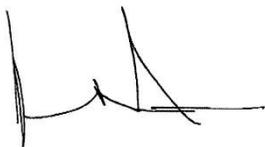
The logic is equally compelling for funding increases that strengthen the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). These two agencies play critically important roles in protecting the nation's public health and making local, state, and national health care systems safer and more efficient.

We request that you provide at least \$7.8 billion for CDC in FY18, an increase of \$620 million or 8.6% percent over FY16 funding. Ebola, Zika, Dengue fever and other emerging health threats have shown just how critical CDC is to our nation, and have also revealed the enormity of the challenge the agency faces as it works to safeguard American lives. Public health threats do not respect borders or laws, and in our increasingly globalized world, we are more vulnerable than ever to emerging infectious diseases. CDC is dedicated to keeping our nation safe, and their leadership in public health research and response has served as the gold standard for other nations to embody; a hallmark testament to American ingenuity and governance. We request that you provide at least \$7.8 billion for CDC in FY18, a strategic investment in the health and security of the American people.

There is also great need for AHRQ to receive robust federal investments. Research!America requests that you provide at least \$364 million for AHRQ in FY18 to restore the cuts made in FY16 and begin empowering AHRQ to leverage more life- and cost-saving health delivery research on behalf of the American people. Underinvesting in AHRQ demonstrates apathy to medical errors, misdiagnoses, health care waste and inefficiencies and sends that message that we accept the current system's limitations and short-comings. A commitment is desperately needed to address weaknesses in our nation's health care system that cost lives and dollars, rather than cutting funding for an agency crucial to finding solutions. AHRQ-funded research has led to identifying how to prevent deadly hospital-acquired infections, implementing multi-state electronic health record systems that prevent duplication and support informed health care decision-making, and honing in on risks for pediatric chemotherapy patients to reduce the need for follow-up care and save lives. We ask that you demonstrate your commitment to cost-saving and life-saving research by providing at least \$364 million for AHRQ in FY18.

We thank you and your respective staffs for your hard work and for your consideration of these funding requests. We appreciate that these decisions are not easy and we laud your continued efforts to place America's health and safety at the forefront of your priorities.

Sincerely,



The Honorable John Edward Porter  
Member of Congress 1980-2001



Mary Woolley  
President and CEO Research!America