



# United for Medical Research

October 21, 2015

Dear Senator and Representative:

We are writing to express our concern that the 2011 Budget Control Act has precluded Congress from crafting a fiscal year 2016 spending plan that advances the strategic interests of the United States. Sequestration has artificially delayed addressing the nation's deficit and debt through entitlement and tax reform, and has caused us to neglect the priorities established by the American people and crucial to our country's future. We must base spending priorities on current and future threats and opportunities, or American security, prosperity, and global leadership will be compromised. Among these priorities are preserving global stability, defending our homeland and fighting diseases that rob Americans of life, health, independence and time.

The contribution that the aerospace and defense (A&D) sector makes to American economic success can be overlooked by many Americans because these resources are deliberately deployed to keep threats well outside our national borders. In fact, the defense sector constitutes roughly 3.5 percent of America's current economic activity or annual gross domestic product (down from 4.5 percent as recently as 2008). A&D provides 5 percent of our national manufacturing output. As this decade started, the aerospace and defense sector was America's third highest gross exporter and made the highest net positive contribution to this country's trade balance of any economic sector. That is why the Federal Reserve's recent revision downward of U.S. annual industrial production, based on a deeper than previously reported downturn in the output of defense and space equipment, is both relevant and alarming.

According to the Washington Post (8/21/15), these revisions coincided with the 2011 budget deal. Unlike prior economic downturns, "manufacturing output still hasn't returned to the pre-crisis levels it reached in 2007." Near-term budget stability is simply essential to overall employment and manufacturing recovery which are integral to US economic health, innovation and middle class success.

Medical research is of similar importance to our citizens and our economy. Today in the United States, 5.3 million Americans – more than the populations of New Hampshire and Iowa combined – are living with Alzheimer's disease. Each year, there are 1.6 million newly diagnosed cases of cancer. And even though research has helped reduce the death rate from childhood cancer by a remarkable 67 percent over the last 40 years, it still remains the leading disease-related cause of death in children. Nearly 86 million U.S. adults – one in three! – suffer from heart disease, stroke and other

forms of cardiovascular disease. These are just three examples of diseases that undermine human capacity and autonomy, take children from their parents, and fuel staggeringly high health care costs. Medicare, Medicaid and other federal health spending currently account for 24 percent of the federal budget. Alzheimer's alone will generate \$226 billion in health and long-term care costs in 2015. Cancer will cost our national economy an additional \$216 billion this year. And cardiovascular disease will cost another \$320 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity.

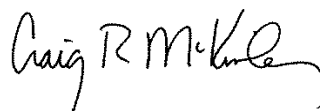
To truly gain control over this spending, we must prevent and stop the diseases that engender it. We need more medical research. No single entity plays a greater role in spurring biomedical innovation than the National Institutes of Health (NIH): it is NIH-funded researchers who have and will continue to forge the path to cures for our most challenging diseases; it is the availability of NIH funding opportunities that will enable the United States to train and retain the next generation of top-flight scientists; and it is NIH-funded research that helps fuel America's life sciences industry, developing medical innovations, creating jobs and contributing to economic growth. Yet, funding of the NIH has been flat for more than a decade. The result is that the NIH has nearly 25 percent less purchasing power today than in 2003, representing countless lost opportunities for making progress against our most vexing diseases and threatening America's global leadership in biomedical research and the life sciences. Before we lose any more ground, Congress must take steps to ensure that the NIH budget catches up from the past decade of neglect.

We appreciate the difficulty of addressing the systemic issues, including tax and entitlement policy, that bear on the nation's long-term fiscal stability, and we stand ready to work with you as you make tough choices. However, we believe a budget script crafted in 2011 should not take precedence over the well-being of the American people in 2016 and beyond. For the sake of the security of our nation and the longevity and health of all Americans, we urge you to move forward with responsible funding of our national security and medical research priorities. We ask that you support a multi-year budget agreement that lifts the discretionary spending caps so that these two important areas of the federal budget can be adequately supported. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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Aerospace Industries Association



Craig R. McKinley  
President and CEO  
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Chris Hansen  
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