

March XX, 2013

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Kingston and Ranking Members Lowey and DeLauro:

As Members of Congress who value the critical role played by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in better health outcomes, job creation, and economic growth, we respectfully request that the NIH receives at least \$32 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014. We feel this amount is the minimum level of funding needed to reflect the rising costs associated with biomedical research and to help mitigate the impacts of sequestration. At a time of unprecedented scientific opportunity, it is critical that the United States make forward-thinking investments that promote medical breakthroughs as well as our international leadership in biomedical research.

Over the past decade, our nation's investment in NIH has often fallen short of what is needed to meet our research needs. After a doubling of NIH's budget that ended in 2003, Congressional appropriations for our nation's greatest research institution have stagnated and failed to keep pace with inflation. We can already see the wide-ranging impact this has had, with dramatically lower grant application success rates and less money available for new researchers seeking their first grant. Students are receiving a world-class education at American universities only to graduate and seek research positions in China, India, or other nations that emphasize investment in biomedical research.

There is time to reverse course, but we must act now. Training an aspiring scientist to be an independent investigator takes more than a decade and involves an extensive process similar to an apprenticeship. With the anemic funding biomedical researches face today, we run the real risk of mentors leaving without being replaced and aspiring scientists being forced into other careers. Ultimately, we could lose an entire generation of biomedical researchers, which could take decades and significant expense to reverse.

Full funding for NIH is critical if the agency is to continue to serve as the world's preeminent medical research institution and our best hope for finding cures, improving treatments, and gaining a better understanding of the complex causes of diseases that affect millions of Americans. The agency conducts research that is too expensive and risky for private industry to undertake alone but has led to major advancements in our understanding of diseases like Alzheimer's, cancer, and Parkinson's. NIH funding has also been supporting the development and implementation of the new National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), which is dedicated to accelerating the conversion of basic research discoveries into clinical applications and therapies with tangible benefit to patients.

In addition to bettering the lives of millions, NIH funding supports 300,000 non-federal scientists and technical personnel at 2,500 research universities and facilities nationwide. Their work drives the demand for medical supplies and research equipment. NIH funding ripples far beyond its headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, benefitting manufacturers and suppliers in every state.

In light of the difficult budget decisions you face, we want to stress the importance of NIH as a job creator, a driver of economic growth, and a vital tool in curbing our nation's soaring healthcare costs. We appreciate your consideration of our request to provide at least \$32 billion in funding for NIH in FY 2014. Please contact Sara Schaumburg (Rep. Markey) at sara.schaumburg@mail.house.gov or Devon Seibert (Rep. McKinley) at devon.seibert@mail.house with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Markey and McKinley