Testimony of Research!America to the Senate Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
Concerning Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations for FDA
Submitted for the Record, April 11, 2019
Contact: Ellie Dehoney, Vice President of Policy and Advocacy, Research!America, edehoney@researchamerica.org

Research!America appreciates the Subcommittee's stewardship over funding for such crucial priorities as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Research!America alliance advocates for science, discovery, and innovation to achieve better health for all and we hope the comments below, which focus on funding for FDA, prove useful as you allocate funding for Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20). We urge you to provide at least $3.49 billion for FDA in FY20, resources urgently needed to enable this agency to safeguard and strengthen the health and safety of the American people.

Overall, FDA oversees more than $2.4 trillion in products, which account for 20 percent of annual spending by U.S. consumers. In 2018, FDA once again demonstrated a rock-solid commitment to evaluating the safety and effectiveness of new products in as efficient a manner as possible, approving 59 novel drugs, 58 percent of which treat rare or orphan diseases. FDA is working collaboratively with patients, academic researchers and industry to responsibly speed the review of medical advances, knowing that any unnecessary delay squanders health and time.

Increased funding for FDA will help the agency keep pace with modern science; validating "biomarkers" that clarify the impact of potential new treatments; tailoring the process of assessing safety and effectiveness to reflect the unique characteristics of regenerative therapies and other rapidly evolving treatments and technologies; and capitalizing on "real world evidence," which empowers the assessment of medical advances in the context of the many factors influencing individual and population health.

Additional resources would also facilitate FDA's role in moving forward key national priorities such as combating Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, a treatment-elusive threat that affects more than 5 million Americans; confronting the escalating use of e-cigarettes by our nation's youth; overcoming the virulent and deadly opioid epidemic; and addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a major public health threat that is depleting the supply of effective antibiotics.

Americans recognize that our nation cannot afford to stand down in the face of threats like these. Since 1992, Research!America has commissioned national and state-level surveys to gauge public sentiment on issues related to research and innovation. According to a national survey we commissioned in 2018 focused on AMR, more than 80% of Americans are concerned that antibiotic resistance will make more infections difficult or impossible to treat, and 3 out of 4 believe the federal government should increase funding for research and public health initiatives to address antibiotic resistance. FDA is responsible for ensuring new antibiotics actually deliver on their potential – that they are safe and effective against the infections they target. We cannot win the battle against AMR unless FDA is resourced to meet this responsibility, and to do so with the sense of urgency a threat of this magnitude demands. This is just one of numerous

examples in which public sentiment and the reality on the ground are aligned in justifying robust investment in FDA.

Given FDA's growing portfolio of responsibilities that bear on the health, safety, and prosperity of the American people, we believe the subcommittee would be advancing the best interests of our nation by supplying FDA with at least $3.49 billion in annual discretionary funding.

I thank you and your respective staffs for your hard work and for your leadership in funding FDA, and for considering Research!America's views.

Sincerely,

Mary Woolley
President and CEO
Research!America