



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

February 11, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Hoyer, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader Schumer:

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research thanks you for your ongoing leadership in maintaining the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as a key national priority. As Congress moves forward with the fiscal year (FY) 2020 spending bills, we write to urge enactment of a bicameral, bipartisan budget agreement that raises the discretionary spending caps and enables a robust investment in NIH and other key health programs in FY 2020 and FY 2021.

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research represents over 300 patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, academic and research organizations, and industry, dedicated to enhancing the federal investment in biomedical, behavioral, social, and population-based research supported by NIH. We are extremely thankful for recent increases to NIH funding and appreciate Congress's continued support for medical research, which offers the hope of better health for patients and inspires the nation's next generation of scientists who seek tomorrow's cures. We are especially grateful that the FY 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS) funding bill not only continued this momentum, but also was enacted on time, giving NIH the opportunity to maximize the federal investment in medical research.

We recognize that these successes were made possible because Congress had the foresight to negotiate budget deals that allowed investment in NIH and other priorities. Specifically, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 provided funding for new NIH initiatives to combat the opioid epidemic, while also enabling growth across NIH's entire portfolio. We are concerned, however,

that without continued relief from the unworkable discretionary spending caps in FY 2020 and FY 2021, NIH's ability to support medical research will face significant hurdles.

Our country is known for its outstanding medical research enterprise, but the current discretionary spending caps will jeopardize our competitive edge in an increasingly innovation-based global marketplace. To maintain our leadership and fulfill our responsibility to the health of all Americans, we must reaffirm the commitment to sustained, robust growth in NIH funding. Without swift agreement on a bipartisan budget deal, appropriators will be handcuffed by impractical spending limits that could slow our progress toward cures and impede our ability to address major public health challenges. Given how critical health security is to our national security, we hope Congress will consider as a top priority a bipartisan budget deal that provides parity between defense and non-defense spending to allow appropriations to be completed in a timely manner.

Once again, we commend you for continuing to recognize NIH as a critical national priority, and we look forward to working with you on our mutual goal of supporting medical research to improve the health of all.

Sincerely,



Tannaz Rasouli
Executive Director

cc:

The Honorable Richard Shelby, Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Vice Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
The Honorable Mike Enzi, Chairman, Senate Committee on the Budget
The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Budget
The Honorable John Yarmuth, Chairman, House Committee on the Budget
The Honorable Steve Womack, Ranking Member, House Committee on the Budget