



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

April 10, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chair Lowey, Vice Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Member Granger:

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) 2021 spending bills, we write to urge you to significantly boost the FY 2021 allocation for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) spending bill to ensure the subcommittee is able to invest fully in NIH and the entire network of health agencies and programs that work together to improve the health of all Americans.

We are grateful for the recent bipartisan agreements to provide supplemental appropriations for NIH and other key health programs as the health care and research community responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the strain COVID-19 is placing on our researchers and research infrastructure, and the strict limits of the FY 2021 discretionary spending caps, the Ad Hoc Group supports the proposal to exempt key health programs from the FY 2021 budget caps. We encourage you to ensure that the allocation for the Labor-HHS Subcommittee appropriately reflects the broad range of national public health priorities under the subcommittee's jurisdiction, including the nation's investment in medical research supported by the NIH, and the important role these programs play in fighting both the ongoing global pandemic and other existing and emerging health threats.

Over the last five years, Congress has helped NIH regain some of the ground lost after years of effectively flat budgets. This most welcome renewed investment in NIH has advanced discovery toward promising therapies and diagnostics, reenergized existing and aspiring scientists nationwide, and restored hope for patients and their families. To further realize the potential of medical research, we must continue this forward momentum with sustained, robust budget growth. For FY 2021, the Ad Hoc Group recommends at least \$44.7 billion for the NIH.

Providing a significant increase for the Labor-HHS allocation will help facilitate such an investment in FY 2021 and position both NIH and the Department of Health and Human Services broadly to deliver on the promise of medical research as our nation responds to COVID-19, tackles existing health challenges, and prepares for the next pandemic. We look forward to working with you on our mutual goal of supporting medical research as a part of the broader public health continuum to improve the health of all.

Sincerely,

Tannaz Rasouli
Executive Director

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research is a coalition of over 330 patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, academic and research organizations, and industry. The Ad Hoc Group has one mission: to enhance the federal investment in biomedical, behavioral, social, and population-based research by increasing the funding for the National Institutes of Health.

cc:

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 Rosa L. DeLauro, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education

The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education