



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

October 5, 2011

Dear Chairman Hensarling, Chairman Murray, and Members of the Joint Committee:

On behalf of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, a coalition of more than 300 patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, academic and research organizations, and industry, I write to respectfully request that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) be recognized as an urgent national priority during deficit reduction negotiations. These are difficult times for our nation, and sustaining the commitment to science is the key to a better future.

The foundation of scientific knowledge built through NIH-funded research across the country drives medical innovation that improves health and quality of life through new and better diagnostics, improved prevention strategies, and more effective treatments. These discoveries have contributed to increased and improved life expectancy over the past century, offering hope to the millions of patients awaiting the possibility of a healthier tomorrow.

Further, NIH-supported research contributes to the nation's economic strength by catalyzing private sector growth and creating skilled, high-paying jobs; new products and industries; and improved technologies. It is critically important that the nation continue to build on the momentum of previous investments to drive research progress, train the next generation of scientists, create new jobs, promote economic growth, and maintain leadership in the global innovation economy—particularly as other countries continue to increase their investments in scientific research.

The caps on domestic discretionary spending enacted in the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) will limit the growth of annual spending bills for the next decade, potentially hampering the ability of the NIH to keep pace with biomedical inflation and scientific promise. We caution that any further cuts to discretionary health spending will undermine Congress's ability to position NIH and the nation to capitalize on the health and economic benefits afforded by medical research.

In this challenging budget environment, we recognize the painful decisions that must be made to secure the nation's fiscal stability. However, it is imperative that such efforts recognize the federal role in promoting the prosperity and well-being of the American people. Especially in times like these, continuing the nation's commitment to medical research through NIH is essential to ensuring the health of all Americans and to maintaining U.S. leadership in an increasingly competitive global scientific arena. The Ad Hoc Group strongly recommends that any deficit reduction negotiations uphold the longstanding legacy of bipartisan support for an unwavering commitment to NIH.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David B. Moore'.

David B. Moore
Executive Director