

Select Statements in Support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Funding
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
Hearing on NIH Fiscal 2018 Budget with NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
March 8, 2017

Subcommittee Chair Roy Blunt (R-MO)

“The \$7.5 billion cut from NIH, would according to analysts, this funding would cost nearly 90,000 jobs nationwide, result in \$15.3 billion of lost economic activity. In my home state of Missouri, that equates to a loss of nearly 1,700 jobs and \$292 million in economic activity. The cut is one that I think you can rest assured this committee will not take. I certainly, fundamentally disagree with the proposed funding reduction.”

“I hope you, Dr. Collins, and your institute directors know how much your work is appreciated. In the last two years, we've increased NIH funding by a little more than 13 percent, and we're going to be listening carefully to your presentations today”

Subcommittee Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA)

“Three months after releasing this proposal, we still do not have basic information from the administration about how NIH would implement a \$7.5 billion reduction without severe consequences for thousands of research facilities and tens of thousands of scientists that rely on its grants to support their work facilities like Fred Hutchinson Institute in my home state of Washington.”

“Just to cite one example where scientists have pioneered bone marrow transplant and today are searching heuristic cancer and HIV vaccine. But because of this proposal could be forced to dramatically scale back their efforts to develop cures for patients.”

“So these cuts are deeply concerning. Which is why I've said repeatedly I really hope that both parties will once again reject President Trump's budget proposal and continue to work together as we have, to ensure NIH is able to carry out its vital work that gives hope to those living with chronic and life-threatening disease and bolster economic growth and competitiveness.”

“This proposal assumes that states or some other benefactor will somehow step in to cover the lion's share of indirect costs once NIH abandons that responsibility. It's a lot to assume that our states are going to pick up what's long been a federal responsibility.”

Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)

“You just can't do it. You don't hit pause on studies. You can't have ups and downs based on the whims of an anti-science group. That hurts the medical research field.”

“Thank you. So I think as Vice Chairman of the overall committee, I am committed to try to get money back in. This science, this is where we can excel, where we can lead the world. But not only that, we can make life so much better for our people and people around the world. So I will fight for every dollar a day, to get back there.”

Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS)

“On behalf of improving the lives and health and well-being of millions of Americans and people around the globe, as well as helping us while we have this health care debate going on, it's always been my belief that if we can devote additional resources into finding cures and delays and treatments of diseases, it's one of the suggestions I made for a long time, we can do a significant benefit to the cost of health care in the United States.

And as we have a debate going on about how to pay for health care, I hope we never forget the opportunity to look at why health care costs so much in the first place.”

“Who pays for that, that's a different question? That's a challenge for lots of folks, but if we can reduce the costs of everyone, all will benefit, and I hope that we can spend a lot of attention on that, including the continued support for NIH and its mission.”

“One of the things that suggest to me that increasing funding for NIH research, there's always -- science brings the new knowledge which then causes us to look in a new area and a new initiative arises which suggests the resources are growing, the need for resources continue to grow, very few things that we get to put the check in the box and say we no longer need to look at this.”

Sen. James Lankford (R-OK)

“Everyone would benefit from things like universal flu vaccines, the Zika vaccine that's obviously progressing, the AIDS vaccine which has been progressing for a long time and getting closer and closer. Those are remarkable discoveries and will help a tremendous number of people. What's happening in cancer, mental health and everything else, we very much appreciate the ongoing research, as it benefits families all over the country and all over the world.”