

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 28, 2017

Dear Colleague:

Please show your support for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by joining the Senate NIH Caucus, a bipartisan caucus dedicated to supporting this critically important agency.

Each of us has been touched by disease. Half of all men and a third of all women in the United States will develop cancer in their lifetimes, and over 600,000 Americans will die of cancer this year. Every 66 seconds an American is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. And our country is in the midst of diabetes, opioid, and obesity epidemics.

NIH supports scientists in every state who are pursuing treatments and cures to prevent and reduce human suffering. But because of sequestration and flat budgets, NIH has lost nearly 20 percent of its purchasing power since 2003, when adjusted for inflation. As a result of this decline, the nation is missing opportunities to discover cures for cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease, diabetes, and countless other diseases. Many of our brightest young scientists are choosing to pursue other careers. And our global leadership in biomedical research is being threatened by China and by other countries investing heavily in this field.

In addition to groundbreaking research, NIH directly supports more than 400,000 jobs across the country, and every \$1 of NIH funding generates more than \$2 in local economic growth.

NIH research is also vital to the nation's long-term fiscal health. We need to invest in cures and prevention on the front end so that we don't bankrupt Medicare treating disease—\$1 out of \$3 Medicare dollars goes to diabetes treatment and \$1 out of \$5 goes to Alzheimer's disease. Overall, Alzheimer's disease alone costs the United States an estimated \$200 billion per year. If no progress is made to cure or delay the onset of this disease, the cost will rise to \$1.1 trillion per year in today's dollars by 2050.

Finally, NIH research enhances our national security through its research on bioterrorism, new and emerging diseases, and pandemics. NIH scientists have accelerated early clinical trials on a Zika vaccine and they are working aggressively to develop a universal influenza vaccine.

The NIH Caucus will offer an opportunity for senators to educate their colleagues about the importance of NIH. The Caucus will also seek a bipartisan strategy to restore the purchasing power that NIH has lost and provide steady, predictable growth for biomedical research in the future.

If you would like to join the NIH Caucus or have any questions, please contact Jessica McNiece in Senator Durbin's office at Jessica_McNiece@durbin.senate.gov or 202.224.2152 or Nick Myers in Senator Graham's office at Nick_Myers@lgraham.senate.gov or 202-224-5972.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator