

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – April 8, 2019

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

[Francis S. Collins @NIHDirector](#)

“[@60Minutes](#) recently highlighted a genetherapy for [#sicklecelldisease](#), and Congress was really interested this AM. Find out how another innovative [#geneediting](#) strategy could lead to a cure for sickle cell and other genetic conditions. [#NIH](#)”

1. FY 2020 Public Witness Testimony Deadlines

The House Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee will host a Public Witness Hearing on Tuesday, April 9. The deadline to submit written testimony for the record is today, Monday, April 8 – the Ad Hoc Group submitted [testimony](#) is on the website. The complete notice and instructions are posted on the subcommittee [website](#).

The Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee posted [instructions](#) for submitting outside witness testimony ahead of its work on FY 2020 appropriations. According to the instructions, testimony should be no longer than four pages and sent to the Subcommittee no later than close of business June 3.

2. NIH Leadership to Testify Before Senate Appropriations Subcommittee – April 11

NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, will be joined by six NIH Institute Directors to [testify](#) on the FY 2020 budget request before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) on April 11 at 10am in 124 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

3. NIH Director Testifies Before House Appropriations Subcommittee

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, and the directors of NICHD, NIAID, NCI, NHLBI, and NIDA [April 2 testified](#) on the fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget proposal before the House Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee.

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) [noted](#) the benefits of medical research and positive impacts of NIH funding on local economies, emphasizing, “that is why I believe that funding this research has the power to do more good for more people than almost anything else within the purview of this subcommittee.” Full Appropriations Committee Chair Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.) also commented that she “would like to increase [the NIH] budget as much as we possibly can.”

Ranking Member Tom Cole (R-Okla.) shared his view that the NIH receives broad bipartisan support in both chambers, and that any funding increases for NIH for FY 2020 will depend on “whether or not we can have a larger [budget] deal that settles the budgetary issues across the board.”

Chairwoman DeLauro also indicated that she intends to hold additional hearings with other NIH Institute directors who have not appeared before the Subcommittee in the recent past.

4. House Budget Committee Advances Legislation to Raise FY 2020 Spending Caps

The House Committee on the Budget April 3 [approved, 19-17](#), the Investing for the People Act of 2019 ([H.R. 2021](#)), which would raise discretionary spending caps above the levels set forth in the Budget Control Act of 2011 ([P.L. 112-25](#)) for defense and nondefense programs in fiscal years (FYs) 2020 and 2021. Committee Chair John Yarmuth (D-Ky.) April 2 introduced the legislation, which would apply the parity principle in raising both defense and nondefense spending by equal amounts. Under the legislation, the revised nondefense cap for FY 2020 would be set to \$631 billion (+\$34 billion or +5.7% over FY 2019). If the spending caps in current statute remain in place, nondefense discretionary spending will be \$542 billion for FY 2020, a decrease of \$55 billion (-9.2%) from FY 2019.

5. Ad Hoc Group Signs Community Letters in Support of Raising Spending Caps

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research signed an April 2 [letter](#) with nearly 850 organizations urging lawmakers to work in a bipartisan fashion to quickly develop an agreement to raise spending caps for discretionary programs, emphasizing the importance of non-defense discretionary programs, including the NIH, to the American economy.

The Ad Hoc group also April 1 signed a [letter](#) with 550 organizations urging Appropriations Committee leadership in both chambers to “significantly boost the [FY] 2020 allocation for [the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies] Subcommittee to address vital and long-neglected needs” of the programs funded through that bill.

6. HHS Secretary Testifies Before Senate Labor-HHS Subcommittee

Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar April 4 [testified](#) on the president’s fiscal year (FY) 2020 budget proposal before the Senate Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee. In their opening statements, Subcommittee Chair Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-Wash.) expressed concerns over the administration’s proposal to cut NIH funding in FY 2020. Chairman Blunt noted that the Subcommittee has historically made NIH a top priority and again would like to make sure that medical research has “the resources it needs,” while noting that Congress must reach a larger budget deal for that to occur. Ranking Member Murray added that “cutting medical research by 13% ... would slow our efforts to advance our understanding of Alzheimer’s Disease, develop vaccines for HIV and flu, and treatments and cures” for all cancers.

7. United for Medical Research – Economic Impact Report Update

United for Medical Research April 1 released an updated [report](#): “NIH’s Role in Sustaining the U.S. Economy.” The updated report shows that, “in fiscal year 2018, [research funded by NIH] supported more than 433,000 jobs and nearly \$74 billion in economic activity across the United States.” The report includes individual data for each state and Washington, D.C.

8. Open Mike: Association Between Receiving K Award, Subsequent Research Support

NIH Deputy Director for Extramural Research Michael Lauer, MD, April 2 authored a [blog post](#) about the correlation between NIH career development K awards and the subsequent receipt of an NIH research project grant. “After accounting for confounders...K awards predicted a 24% increased likelihood of subsequent first R01 or RPG,” Dr. Lauer stated. He also added that “K awards were not independently predictive of second awards.”

9. Extramural Nexus: Funding Strategies for NIH Institutes and Centers

NIH Staff April 1 [posted](#) on the *Extramural Nexus* about updated funding strategies for each NIH Institute and Center. Staff suggests that readers can “use this information as you prepare your application to better understand NIH’s approach to grant funding and stay updated on key budget policies.”

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Other Events

10. Congressional Briefing on the Microbiome– April 8

The Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus is hosting a briefing titled, “Soaps, Vitamins, and the Microbiome: What’s the Real Truth Behind the Microbiome?” The briefing will take place Monday, April 8, from Noon-1pm in 2075 Rayburn House Office Building. Please see attached for additional details, and RSVP to cls@coalitionforlifesciences.org.

11. Bipartisan Policy Center Briefing on Comparative Effectiveness Research – April 9

The Bipartisan Policy Center is hosting a briefing titled “Comparative Effectiveness Research: Recent Applications and Future Investments.” The briefing will take place Tuesday, April 9, from 9:30am – noon at the Bipartisan Policy Center (1225 Eye St. NW, Suite 1000). Additional details and a link to register are on the [event website](#).

12. ITIF Policy Roundtable on “Healthy Funding” Report – April 9

The Information Technology & Innovation Foundation (ITIF) March 25 released a report on the value of NIH funding (see related story above). ITIF will host a policy roundtable discussion on this report Tuesday, April 9, from 2-3:30pm in 216 Hart Senate Office Building. Additional details are available on the [registration site](#).

13. 50th Anniversary Celebration of NHLBI’s Division of Lung Disease – April 9

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Constituency Group is hosting and will be celebrating the 50th year of the NHLBI’s Division of Lung Disease at a congressional reception on April 9th at 5:30 PM in 2060 Rayburn House Office Building. Featured attendees include Dr. Louis Sullivan, former HHS Secretary; Dr. Gary Gibbons, NHLBI Director. Featured congressional sponsors include House Appropriations Labor-HHS Subcommittee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) and Ranking Member Tom Cole (R-Okla.), Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.), and Rep. Chris Stewart (R-Utah). See attached invitation and RSVP to griffin@hmcw.org.

14. The Myositis Association Grants Webinar – April 9

The Myositis Association (TMA) is hosting a [webinar](#) titled, “Position Your Myositis Grant for Success” to outline TMA’s grant process, describe a strong grant application, and answer questions. This webinar takes place Tuesday, April 9 at 12 noon ET. [Registration](#) in advance is required.

15. Congressional BRAIN Investigators Reception – April 10

Please join the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) at a Congressional reception celebrating the NIH’s Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative and its researchers. The event will take place Wednesday, April 10, from 5-7pm in the Kennedy

Caucus Room, Russell Senate Office Building. Please see attached for additional information, and RSVP to Kelly Baker at crdfellow2@dc-crd.com.

16. AAMC/FASEB Hosting Webinar on NAS Sexual Harassment of Women in Science – April 22

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) are hosting the sixth and final webinar in their 2018 National Academies reports [webinar series](#). Study Frzier Benya, PhD, of the National Academies, will unpack the key findings of the report "[Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#)". The webinar is being held on April 22, 1:00-2:00 PM ET and free [registration](#) is required.

17. COSSA Celebration of Social Science – April 30

Please join the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) Board of Directors, members, advocates, staff and special guests for a Celebration of Social Science Rooftop Reception on April 30 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Please see the attached invitation for details and feel free to share with others. [RSVP](#) is required to gain access to the rooftop.

18. NIH Regional Seminar in Baltimore, MD: May 15-17

The NIH is hosting the Spring 2019 NIH Regional Seminar on Program Funding and Grants Administration in Baltimore, MD, from Wed. May 15- Fri. May 17. Visit the [website](#) to learn more about the [program](#) and to [register](#).

19. NIH ACD Meeting: June 13-14

In a [Federal Register notice](#), the NIH announced the next Advisory Committee to the Director meeting will be held June 13-14 at the National Institutes of Health, Natcher Building, Conference Room D, 45 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892. Preliminary agenda items include: the NIH Director's Report, ACD Working Group Reports, and Other Business of the Committee.

Job Postings

PCORI Seeks Advisor, Public Policy

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute seeks an Advisor, Public Policy. Position responsibilities include: supporting outreach efforts to Congressional staff and external policymakers; supporting and coordinating messaging initiatives; supporting and coordinating projects for the Engagement Department; and more. Please visit the [job posting](#) to apply.

March of Dimes Seeks Director of Public Policy Research

March of Dimes seeks a Director of Public Policy Research. This individual would be responsible for generating policy analysis and documents, supporting the Advocacy and Government Affairs team by providing data and information, maintaining March of Dimes' profile in the policy research and academic community, and serving as an integral member of cross-departmental work and teams. Additional details and application information can be found [here](#).

AACR Seeks Director, Congressional Relations

The American Association for Cancer Research seeks a [Director of Congressional Relations](#) to: provide specialized expertise and support to AACR leaders, including the Science Policy and Government Affairs Committee, its relevant subcommittees, and broader partners in the

community to further the goals of the AACR's Strategic Plan and policy priorities. To apply, please submit your cover letter and resume humanresources@aacr.org.

ASHG Seeks Policy and Advocacy Manager

ASHG also seeks a Policy & Advocacy Manager help fulfill the Society's policy and advocacy functions by tracking, analyzing and drafting material on policy issues; staffing volunteer bodies to develop policy material and advocacy programming; helping to build and then manage advocacy activity of Society's leadership and membership; and strengthening relations with Congress. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site to learn more and to apply.

University of Florida Seeks Assistant Director of Federal Relations

The University of Florida Seeks an Assistant Director of Federal Relations for the Washington, D.C. office. Essential job functions include: manage and execute the government relations program for a portfolio of the University's federal interests; anticipate, monitor and analyze federal policy; and more. Details and application instructions are available on the [job posting site](#).

American Heart Association Seeks Regulatory Affairs Manager

Under the direction of the Vice President of Federal Advocacy, the [Regulatory Affairs Manager](#) would be responsible for monitoring, analyzing, and drafting responses to a prescribed set of federal regulatory and reimbursement-related issues that impact the association's public policy agenda. The primary focus of the AHA's regulatory work is with the Department of Health and Human Services and its key agencies.

Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Christa Wagner at chwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.