

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – December 5, 2016

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets suggested by members of the NIH advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round-Up.

Follow us on Twitter. The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research is now on Twitter: @fundNIH

1. **Top Congressional Republicans Urge the President-elect to Keep Collins as NIH Director**

House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman Fred Upton (R-Mich.), Senate HELP Committee chairman Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), and House and Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittees chairmen Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and Tom Cole (R-Okla.) Dec. 2 sent a letter (attached) to the President-elect's transition team, urging the new administration to “[K]eep Dr. Francis Collins as the Director of the National Institutes of Health in your administration.” The letter states that Dr. Collins is the “right person, at the right time” to lead the NIH, adding that “under his leadership with Congress’ commitment to biomedical research as a national priority, the National Institutes of Health will thrive and continue to enhance the Nation’s health through scientific discovery and biomedical research.”

2. **Continuing Resolution Text to be Released Tuesday**

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) indicated that text of a continuing resolution (CR) would be released Tuesday, Dec. 6. The current CR expires Dec. 9. The CR is expected to run *at least* through March 31, 2017; recent reports indicate that a longer CR is more likely. The White House continues to [express](#) concern over a CR, noting that “the ideal would be for them to pass a budget through the remainder of the fiscal year.” However, the President is expected to sign a CR. White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest added that the White House is “hopeful that if Congress does have to pass a CR, that it’s a short one so that they can get back to work after the holidays and actually pass one through the remainder of the fiscal year.”

3. **Senate to Consider House-passed 21st Century Cures Package**

The House of Representatives Nov. 30 approved, by a vote of 392-26, the 21st Century Cures Act ([H.R. 34](#)). Among other provisions of interest to the research advocacy community, the bill establishes an “Innovation Account” for specific initiatives at the NIH and the FDA. The bill provides \$500 million for initiatives at the FDA. For NIH, the bill provides \$4.796 billion, including \$1.455 billion for the Precision Medicine Initiative; \$1.511 billion for the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neuroethologies (BRAIN) Initiative; \$1.8 billion for the Cancer Moonshot Initiative; and \$30 million for clinical research to advance regenerative medicine using adult stem cells. The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Nov. 29 [issued](#) a

statement, noting that the bill “provides a meaningful injection of funds for lifesaving biomedical research.” The Senate later today has a procedural vote on the “Cures” bill.

4. President-elect Trump Names Nominee for HHS Secretary

Rep. Tom Price, M.D., (R-Ga.) Nov. 29 was announced as President-elect Trump’s nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services. Currently, Dr. Price is the Chairman of the House Budget Committee and a member of the House Ways and Means Committee. Before serving in Congress, Dr. Price was an Associate Professor at Emory University School of Medicine and Medical Director of the Orthopedic Clinic at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta, Ga.

5. *Science Policy Happy Hour*

DC Science Policy Happy Hour

Thursday, December 1, 2016

5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Elephant & Castle, 900 19th St. NW, Washington, D.C.

Engaging Scientists and Engineers in Policy (ESEP) will be hosting a regular happy hour for D.C.-based people interested in or already engaged in science policy.

For more information about the event, please contact Erin Heath, AAAS, at eh Heath@aaas.org or Toby Smith, AAU, at toby_smith@aau.edu.

6. *Webinar on Opportunities to Advance Biomedical Innovation*

Opportunities for the Next Administration to Advance Biomedical Innovation

Hosted by FasterCures

Thursday, December 8, 2016

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Webinar

This webinar will discuss ways for the next administration to continue the progress in biomedical research as well as opportunities for the next administration to promote biomedical innovation.

Speakers:

- **Patrick White**, President, Act for NIH; and
- **Mary Dwight**, Senior Vice President for Policy and Patient Programs, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Moderator:

- **Margaret Anderson**, Executive Director, *FasterCures*, a center of the Milken Institute

Please register for the webinar [here](#).

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 Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org or Clay Crabtree at ccrabtree@aamc.org.