

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – February 25, 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:

[NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute @nih_nhlbi](#)

"A4: Today's Faces of Sickle Cell Disease highlights the stories of people living with [#sicklecell](#) disease, their loved ones, clinicians, and the researchers whose work offers hope for a cure. Read [#SCDFaces](#): <https://go.usa.gov/xEEw6> [#NIHChat](#)"

1. President's FY 2020 Budget Expected to Request Broad Non-Defense Discretionary Cuts

Acting director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Russ Vought writes in a Feb. 25 *RealClear Politics* [commentary](#) that the president's upcoming FY 2020 budget request "will meet the target of a 5 percent reduction to non-defense discretionary spending, by means of one of the largest spending reductions in history." Vought continues, "Within these constrained levels, agencies will still be able to provide investments in key national priorities." Vought also notes that the budget request will adhere to budget caps laid out in the 2011 Budget Control Act, while defense spending will see an increase, citing that "additional needed defense resources will be designated as Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds, which are not subject to the spending caps."

2. Senate Budget Committee Hearing on 2011 Budget Control Act – Feb. 27

The Senate Committee on the Budget [will hold](#) a Feb. 27 hearing titled "The Budget Control Act: A review of Cap-Adjusted Spending." The hearing will take place at 2:30pm in 608 Dirksen Senate Office Building. Teri Gullo, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis from the Congressional Budget Office will be the sole witness.

3. Ad Hoc Group Sends Letter to Congressional Leaders Urging Budget Cap Negotiations

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Feb. 11 [sent a letter](#) to Congressional leaders urging enactment of a bicameral, bipartisan budget agreement that raises the discretionary spending caps and enables a robust investment in NIH and other key health programs in FY 2020 and FY 2021. The letter stated, "the current discretionary spending caps will jeopardize our competitive edge in an increasingly innovation based global marketplace. To maintain our leadership and fulfill our responsibility to the health of all Americans, we must reaffirm the commitment to sustained, robust growth in NIH funding."

4. Senate Labor-HHS Subcommittee Hearing on the Opioid Epidemic – Feb. 28

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor-HHS [will hold](#) a Feb. 28 hearing "to examine addressing the opioid epidemic in America, focusing on prevention, treatment, and recovery on the state and local level." The hearing will take place at 10 am in 124 Dirksen Senate Office Building. No witnesses have been announced.

5. House Energy and Commerce Hearing on Measles Outbreaks – Feb. 27

The House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations [will hold](#) a Feb. 27 hearing titled “Confronting a Growing Public Health Threat: Measles Outbreaks in the U.S.” The hearing will be held at 10 am in 2123 Rayburn House Office Building. NIAID Director Anthony Fauci, MD, is among witnesses scheduled to testify.

6. NIH Announces New Director of the Center for Scientific Review

The NIH Feb. 14 [announced](#) that the Noni Byrnes, PhD, has been selected as the director of the Center for Scientific Review (CSR), which manages the receipt and referral of all grant proposals for NIH and the peer review of 75% of the NIH's nearly 50,000 grant applications. Dr. Byrnes, who has been serving as acting director since the retirement of former director Richard Nakamura, PhD, in May 2018, started her new role on Feb. 17.

7. Opinion: Making the Case to Double NIH

In a *Cancer Letter* [editorial](#), ACT for NIH founder and chairman Jed Manocherian writes an editorial in support of doubling the NIH budget in the next 10 years. Manocherian argues that “even with historic increases to the NIH budget in the past four years, funding levels are not even close to adequate to capitalize on all of today’s great scientific opportunities... [and that] [t]he cost is billions, the return is trillions, and it is priceless to patients and their families.”

8. HHS Inspector General Report on NIH Controls of Sensitive Data

The HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG) Feb. 5 issued a [report](#) “Opportunities Exist for the National Institutes of Health to Strengthen Controls in Place to Permit and Monitor Access to Its Sensitive Data.” OIG made the following recommendations to NIH: work with an organization with expertise and knowledge in scientific data misuse; strengthen its controls by developing a security framework, conducting a risk assessment, and implementing additional appropriate security controls designed to safeguard sensitive data; develop and implement mechanisms to ensure data security policies keep current with emerging threats; and make security awareness training and security plans a requirement. NIH responded that it is addressing some of OIG’s recommendations through a newly established working group that reports to NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD.

9. Science: The First Interview with Trump's New Science Adviser

[Science](#) Feb. 14 published an interview with newly-appointed White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) Director Kelvin Droegemeier, PhD. Dr. Droegemeier states, “I think [P]resident [Trump] strongly supports science. And there's a huge amount of evidence for the tremendous scientific advances that have happened on his watch.” Dr. Droegemeier also commented on the relationship between academia, industry, philanthropy, and government, suggesting that “we need more efficiency, more interaction, more collaboration. No other country comes close to having what we have.” Dr. Droegemeier continues, “Yes, the federal government still has an important role, but the context is very different than it was 30 or 40 years ago... we’ve got a \$22-trillion debt in this country. We all have to work together to figure out how to leverage those federal dollars in the maximum way possible.” The interview also covers Dr. Droegemeier’s thoughts on harassment, espionage, and paperwork in science, and includes a nod to OSTP’s [newest publication](#), “Science & Technology Highlights in the Second Year of the Trump Administration.”

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Other Events

10. Research!America Rare Diseases Panel Discussion and Reception – Feb. 26

Research!America will host a Feb. 26 panel discussion titled “Rare Diseases: Perspectives on Progress” at the Washington Court Hotel from 5:00-6:00pm, followed by a networking reception. Please [register here](#) or see the online flyer for [more information](#).

11. Friends of NIDA Congressional Briefing – Feb. 27

The Friends of NIDA are co-hosting a congressional briefing titled “Opportunities and Challenges in Cannabinoid Research.” The lunch briefing includes remarks from NIDA Director Nora Volkow, MD, and will take place on Feb. 27 from 12:00-1:30pm in 2043 Rayburn House Office Building. Please [click here to RSVP](#) or [click here to view flyer](#).

12. NCATS Hosting Rare Disease Day – Feb. 28

The NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) with the NIH Clinical Center is hosting [Rare Disease Day](#) on Feb. 28 on the NIH campus in Bethesda, MD. The annual event is intended to raise awareness about these diseases, the people they affect, and new research opportunities through panel discussions, posters, artwork, tours, and networking opportunities. Speakers include NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD; NCATS Director Christopher Austin, MD; and NIH Clinical Center CEO James Gilman, MD. Admission is complimentary and open to the public. On February 22, NIH will host a Twitter chat on rare diseases from 1-2 pm featuring Drs. Collins, Austin, and Gilman as well as representatives from the rare diseases advocacy community.

13. AEVR Congressional Briefing – Mar. 6

The Alliance for Eye and Vision Research is co-hosting a Congressional briefing titled “Understanding the Genetic Basis of Glaucoma to Develop Vision Loss Prevention Strategies.” The lunch briefing will take place on Mar. 6 from 12:00-1:15 pm in 2168 Rayburn House Office Building. Please see attached flyer for additional information.

14. Biophysical Society Congressional Briefing – Mar. 13

Please join the Biophysical Society and Congressman Bill Foster (D-IL-11) for a CRISPR-101 briefing presented by Dr. Jennifer Doudna on Mar. 13 from 10:30 - 11:30am in 2168 Rayburn House Office Building. This briefing is designed for new Members of Congress and staff and will provide a broad overview of the technology, discuss its ethical use and patenting issues, and is intended for a lay audience. Please see attached flyer for additional information. To RSVP [please fill out this form](#) or contact Sean Winkler at swinkler@biophysics.org.

15. CLS Congressional Briefing: NIH 101 – Mar. 14

The Coalition for the Life Sciences is hosting a Congressional briefing titled “NIH 101: An Introduction to the National Institutes of Health” on Mar. 14 from 12-1pm in 122 Cannon House Office Building. Please RSVP to cls@coalitionforlifesciences.org and see attached flyer for additional information. The briefing is the first in a series, see attached for full briefing calendar.

16. AAMC/FASEB Webinar on NAS Integration of Humanities and STEM Report – Mar.

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) are hosting the fourth webinar in their 2018 National Academies reports [webinar series](#). Study director Ashley Bear, PhD, of the National Academies, will unpack the key findings of the report "[The Integration of the Humanities and Arts with Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in Higher Education: Branches of the Same Tree](#)," in a Mar. 18 webinar, from 1:00-2:00 PM ET. Free [registration](#) is required.

17. 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

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.

Academy for Radiology & Biomedical Imaging Seeks Director of Communications and Membership

The Academy is seeking an experienced professional for a Director of Communications and Membership, to maintain and improve organizational branding and messaging for internal and external communications. This position will work with a two-person communications staff to create and execute a range of activities intended to raise awareness of our mission and work, as well as the state of policy and grassroots efforts to our membership. Please see attached for additional information. Applications can be sent to ETownley@acadrad.org.

PCORI Seeks Associate Director, Public Policy

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute seeks an Association Director, Public Policy. Position responsibilities include: supporting the Director for Public Policy and Government Relations, Chief Engagement and Dissemination Officer, and the PCORI Board of Governors and executives in representing PCORI with Congress; and more. Please visit the [job posting](#) to apply.

FASEB Seeks Senior Science Policy Analyst

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology seeks a Senior Science Policy Analyst. Primary functions of the role include analyzing science policy issues and independently managing committees, projects, reports, and seminars/workshops pertaining to the training and development of the biological and biomedical workforce and more. Please visit FASEB's [employment opportunities](#) site for [additional information](#).

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.