

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – September 18, 2017

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 welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here's this week's featured tweet:

Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research (@FundNIH)

.@RepKevinYoder: "From dollars saved to lives saved to jobs created, by the numbers — this is a no-brainer." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVMZVNOFBb0&feature=youtu.be>

1. House Advances FY 2018 Funding Bills with NCI Amendments

On Sept. 14, the House of Representatives advanced a fiscal year (FY) 2018 “octopus” spending package by a vote of [211-198](#). The “[Make America Secure and Prosperous Appropriations Act](#)” (H.R. 3354) approved by the House contains the FY 2018 Labor-HHS-Education spending bill ([H.R. 3358](#), H.Rept. [115-234](#)) approved by the House Appropriations Committee in July, as well as seven other FY 2018 spending bills. Of the 224 amendments ruled in order by House Rules Committee, two NIH related amendments were included in the final measure. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (D-Calif.) offered an [amendment](#), which was [adopted](#) by voice vote en bloc, aimed at increasing National Cancer Institute (NCI) funding by \$1 million to execute a study on how to improve doctor-patient communication. Additionally, the House approved by voice vote an [amendment](#) offered by Rep. Rick Nolan (D-Minn.) to increase NCI funding by \$3.819 million offset with a reduction to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Secretary account. In a statement issued after House action, Labor-HHS Subcommittee Chair Tom Cole (R-Okla.) released a [statement](#) applauding the bill saying, “For the third consecutive year, we have increased funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by \$1.1 billion from the previous year’s levels. Funding in the House bill will advance research in a number of key areas, to include Alzheimer’s and pediatric cancer research among others.”

2. Wall Street Journal Op-Ed on Animal Research

On Sept. 18, Foundation for Biomedical Research President Matthew Bailey [wrote](#) an Op-Ed in the Wall Street Journal urging readers to support animal research. The piece, titled, “Love your Dog, Support Animal Research,” highlights the progress researchers are making with the help of animals, despite opposition of animal rights groups. Bailey says that the use of lab animals benefit livestock and endangered species among others, pointing out that “Animals are living longer, healthier lives.” He goes on to write that, “Discouraging studies condemns animals to unnecessary suffering and death from preventable illnesses. Real animal lovers should be proud to support animal research.”

3. Efforts to End Dog Research at the VA Meets Strong Resistance from Veterans, Science

Proposals targeting the defunding of dog research studies at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have encountered stiff resistance from science and veterans groups. [VA Secretary David Shulkin](#), the [Paralyzed Veterans of America \(PVA\)](#), [The American Legion](#), [Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America \(IAVA\)](#), [Friends of VA \(FOVA\)](#), [American Veterinary Medical Association \(AVMA\)](#), [American Physiological Society \(APS\)](#), and the [American Association for Laboratory Animal Science \(AALAS\)](#) have all spoken out against attempts by Reps. Dave Brat (R-VA) and Dina Titus (D-NV) to prohibit canines in certain types of research at the VA through legislation like [H.R. 3197](#) (the PUPPPERS Act) and a [similar amendment](#) approved by the House in the homeland security “minibus” in July.

Dogs have been influential in development of the cardiac pacemaker, the first liver transplant, the nicotine patch, the discovery of insulin, and most recently the first FDA-approved artificial pancreas. The National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) has sent an alert asking its members to [contact Congress](#) and encourages you and all interested in medical progress to do the same.

4. AACR Releases 2017 Cancer Progress Report

On Sept. 13, the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) [released](#) its Cancer Progress Report 2017: Harnessing Research Discoveries to Save Lives. This year's report chronicles how federally funded research continues to improve lives, and it shows that our ability to fully capitalize on our ever-growing knowledge of cancer is dependent on robust, sustained, and predictable federal funding. The report highlights how recent advances across the clinical cancer care continuum, in particular immunotherapy and molecularly-targeted therapies, are helping cancer patients and their families. This year's report also focuses on the continued challenges we face in addressing cancer health disparities.

5. Dr. Collins Interviewed by Diane Rehm

On Sept. 15, Diane Rehm [interviewed](#) NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD. During the interview, Dr. Collins talks about his reappointment to the NIH, the Administration's proposed cuts, and Congress's support for NIH in FY 2018. Dr. Collins also discusses research related to gene editing, regenerative medicine, and immunotherapy among other items.

6. NIH News Release: Ostell named Director of NCBI

In a news release posted on Sept. 11, the NIH [announced](#) that James M. Ostell, PhD, will be the director of the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI). According to the release, Dr. Ostell has been with NCBI since it was established by Congress in 1988, and has helped shape it into one of the most widely used biomedical resources in the world.

7. NSABB Workshop on Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern

On Sept. 25-26, the NIH and the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) will co-host a workshop to engage with stakeholders and facilitate information sharing among research institutions regarding their approaches to, and experiences with, implementing the [United States Government Policy for Institutional Oversight of Life Sciences Dual Use Research of Concern \(DURC\)](#).

This two-day workshop will involve discussions with diverse institutional representatives and facilitate the sharing of experiences including strategies, best practices, challenges, and solutions regarding policy implementation and the identification and management of DURC. While webcasting will not be available, the meeting will be recorded for future viewing on the [OSP Website](#). For additional details and to register please visit the [workshop website](#). Email Kevin Ramkissoon (ramkissoonkr@od.nih.gov) for questions.

8. Golden Goose Awards

The [Golden Goose Awards](#), taking place on Sept. 27 at the Library of Congress, celebrate the stories of how basic research delivers major societal impacts – from NIH-funded [massages for baby rats](#) that changed how we treat premature babies (and saved billions in health care costs) to the once canceled NIH-funded [adolescent health study](#) that informs everything from school curricula to public health programs. Each year, three teams of researchers are showcased through written stories and documentary videos, and honored with an award ceremony in Washington, DC each fall. The award depends on the support of partners in the science community, and more than twenty different organizations in our

community and beyond contribute each year. Additional details for the ceremony are attached; RSVP [here](#).

9. Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus Briefing

Join the Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus for a briefing featuring Joshua Schiffman, MD, a childhood cancer survivor, childhood cancer researcher, and childhood cancer doctor. Dr. Schiffman will discuss where cancer comes from in children, new research tools being developed to identify who is at risk for cancer before it happens, and exciting new approaches to treating and maybe one day even preventing cancer. This includes learning what we can about children with cancer from studying our pet dogs, who naturally develop a lot of cancer, and also from studying elephants, who naturally resist cancer. This briefing will be held on Sept. 27 in 2060 Rayburn House Office Building from noon to 1pm. RSVP by emailing Lynn Marquis at cls@coalitionforlifesciences.org. More information is in the attached flyer. Boxed lunches will be available for attendees.

10. American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering Congressional Briefing

On Sept. 29, as part of Healthy Aging Month, the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) will host a Capitol Hill briefing titled, "Eyes to the Future: Meet the Inventor of the Bionic Eye." It is projected that the annual cost of vision disorders in the United States by 2050 will be \$373 billion—or \$717 billion when adjusted for inflation. This cost is driven by an aging population in need of more advanced eye health care. Biomedical engineers are working to solve this problem through research and development supported by federal science agencies, including the National Eye Institute. The briefing will take place from noon to 1pm in B-339/2044 Rayburn House Office Building. More information is available in the attached flyer. RSVP to Sarah Mandell at smandell@aimbe.org. Boxed lunches will be provided.

11. 14th Annual AERA Brown Lecture In Education Research with Alfredo J. Artiles

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) invites you to its [Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research](#). This lecture is designed to feature the important role of research in advancing understanding of equality and equity in education. This year's featured speaker is Alfredo Artiles, PhD, dean of graduate education and the Ryan C. Harris professor of special education at Arizona State University. Dr. Artiles is a leading scholar on understanding and addressing educational inequities related to the intersections of disability with other sociocultural differences. The lecture will take place from 6 to 9 pm ET on Oct. 19 at the Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center (1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW Washington, DC). You may RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/14th-annual-aera-brown-lecture-in-education-research-tickets-35522375381?aff=email072717>. This event is free and open to the public. A buffet reception will follow.

12. SfN Invites You to Its Neurobiology of Disease Workshop

On Nov. 10, The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) will host a [2017 Neurobiology of Disease Workshop](#), "Gene Therapy to Address Unmet Needs in Neurology." This workshop will feature Florian Eichler, MD, Xandra O. Breakefield, PhD, and [others](#) to discuss the breadth of current and emerging gene therapy approaches to treat neurologic disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, ALS, or muscular dystrophy. This workshop embraces the breadth of "gene therapy" including viral vectors, oligonucleotides, and cell therapies used in promising preclinical studies and clinical trials for a variety of neurologic disorders long thought to be incurable. These new methods involve DNA engineering, gene replacement using virus vectors and the patient's own genetically modified cells, oligonucleotides that can "revive" beneficial gene

functions or suppress toxic ones, and viruses and cells armed to tackle brain tumors. For questions, please email training@sfn.org.

13. FasterCures Convenes “Partnering for Cures” in San Francisco

Since 2009, [Partnering for Cures](#) (P4C) has been convening leaders with the experience, creativity, and motivation needed to transform the medical research system. The event is convened annually by [FasterCures](#), a center of the Milken Institute, and connects decision-makers from across diseases who are motivated by the same mission – to reduce the time and cost of getting new therapies from discovery to patients. *FasterCures* is taking P4C on the road and convening a smaller, cross-sector group of medical research leaders in San Francisco. Registration is now open for P4C San Francisco on Nov. 14. Find out more information at <http://www.partneringforcures.org/>.

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 Joe Bañez at jbanez@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.