

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – November 21, 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.

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1. Ad Hoc Group Letter to House and Senate Leaders Urges \$34.1 Billion for NIH by End of Calendar Year

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Nov. 16 sent a [letter](#) to leaders of the House and Senate, thanking them for their leadership in championing sustained, real growth in medical research funding. The letter, signed by 229 members of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, urges House and Senate leaders to include the Senate-proposed \$34.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in a final fiscal year (FY) 2017 spending package by the end of this calendar year.

2. House and Senate Leadership Taking Shape

House Republicans have unanimously selected Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wisc.) and House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) to remain in their respective positions. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) was reelected to continue leading Senate Republicans. With Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) retiring at the end of the 114th congress, Senate Democrats unanimously elected Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) to serve as the new Senate Minority Leader. House Democrats Nov. 30 will hold their leadership elections; Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Ohio) announced that he will challenge House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) for the position.

Senate Democrats also finalized committee leadership assignments. Senator Pat Leahy (D-Vt.) announced that he will serve as the ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), who is the current ranking member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, is retiring at the end of the 114th congress. Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) will continue serving as Ranking Member of the HELP Committee while Senator Jon Tester (D-Mont.) will replace Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) as Ranking Member of the Veterans Affairs Committee.

3. NIH Director Discusses Progress in Regenerative Medicine Research

NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., Nov. 15 [discussed](#) NIH-funded research has found that connective tissue growth factor (CTGF) is secreted when a zebrafish's spinal cord is damaged, and regenerates the damaged cells of the severed spinal cord. The researchers also

found that applying human CTGF near the damaged cells accelerates the regenerative process. This NIH-supported research is being led by Kenneth Poss, Ph.D., and Maysa Mokalled, Ph.D., of Duke University.

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.