

November 12, 2013

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Budget Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chair
Budget Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Chairman Ryan:

The undersigned organizations and institutions, which represent patients, scientists, health care providers, universities, and industry, are gravely concerned about the impact of continued cuts, including sequestration, on medical research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the subsequent negative consequences for the health of all Americans. We respectfully urge Congress and the Administration to work together on a responsible FY 2014 budget agreement that replaces sequestration with a balanced plan that recognizes the significant cuts already made to discretionary programs, preserves the nation's investment in medical research, and protects the health of the American people.

NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., has said the nation is on the cusp of benefiting from “unprecedented scientific opportunity,” and that “we’ve never had a better chance to make rapid progress in preventing, diagnosing, and curing human disease.” However, instead of investing more in medical research, our nation’s commitment to medical research has continued to shrink to a point where we are sacrificing real opportunities for discovery of new innovations and medical advances.

Sequestration resulted in a \$1.5 billion reduction in funding for NIH in FY 2013. As a result, NIH estimates that it funded 650 fewer competitive research project grants, resulting in a historically low success rate of 17 percent. Dr. Collins has summed up the repercussions of those numbers by saying, **“I can’t say which of those grants would have led to the next breakthrough, or which investigator would be a Nobel Prize winner 20 years from now.”** Moreover, sequestration’s cuts are following a decade where NIH has lost nearly one-fifth of its purchasing power after inflation, further threatening our nation’s position as the world leader in research and discovery.

In an interview in The Washington Post, Dr. Collins said that the budget cuts are delaying innovation and resulting in more American lives being lost. “When you’re talking about developing cures, speed matters,” he said. Among the critical projects that have lost resources is the effort to develop a universal flu vaccine that scientists hope might prevent pandemics.

As another example, the Framingham Heart Study, which for more than 60 years has produced a wellspring of information that has led to the identification of the major risk factors of cardiovascular disease and dramatic reductions in the death rates for heart disease and stroke, will lose \$4 million, or 40 percent, of its funding. This cut will result in the loss of clinical and

administrative staff, reductions in clinic exams and lab operations, and a considerable scale-back of the scope of research, all of which will diminish the ability to identify new risk factors such as genetic factors, for cardiovascular disease.

Cuts in NIH funding also are negatively affecting the next generation of scientists. In a recent survey conducted by the Association of American Medical Colleges, nearly two-thirds of the Ph.D. programs that responded reported that they have decreased or are anticipating decreasing the size of their programs and nearly one in five M.D.-Ph.D. programs indicated a decrease or anticipated decrease in students in the coming year.

If we are to address the health challenges of an aging and increasingly diverse population, and remain a vibrant force in the global economy, America needs more investment in medical research, not less. We respectfully urge Congress and the Administration to work together on a responsible FY 2014 budget that replaces sequestration with a balanced plan that recognizes the significant cuts already made to discretionary programs, preserves the nation's investment in medical research, and protects the health of the American people.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association
Academy of Radiology Research
Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research
Alliance for Aging Research
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Anthropological Association
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for Dental Research
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Brain Coalition
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Chemical Society
American College of Radiology (ACR)
American College of Rheumatology
American Diabetes Association
American Educational Research Association
American Federation For Aging Research
American Gastroenterological Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Osteopathic Association

American Pediatric Society
American Physiological Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Psychosomatic Society
American Society for Bone and Mineral Research
The American Society for Cell Biology
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy
American Society for Investigative Pathology
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Pediatric Hematology Oncology (ASPHO)
American Sociological Association
American Thoracic Society
American Urogynecologic Society
Americans for Medical Progress
Arthritis Foundation
Association for Psychological Science
Association for Research in Otolaryngology (ARO)
Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities (AAU)
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Independent Research Institutes
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH)
AVAC: Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
Baylor College of Medicine
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Boston
Biophysical Society
BioSTL (St. Louis)
Brigham and Women's Health Care
BrightFocus Foundation
Brown University
Cedars-Sinai Health System
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Coalition for Imaging and Bioengineering Research
Coalition for the Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Sciences Research

Coalition for the Life Sciences
Coalition to Promote Research
Collaborative for Enhancing Diversity in Science
Columbia University
Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cooley's Anemia Foundation
Creighton University
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Digestive Disease National Coalition
Digestive Health Alliance
Duke University Hospital
Duke University School of Medicine
Emory University
The Endocrine Society
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
GBS/CIDP Foundation International
George Washington University Cancer Institute
Gerontological Society of America
Harvard University
Hepatitis B Foundation
HIV Medicine Association
Indiana University
Infectious Diseases Society of America
James Graham Brown Cancer Center at the University of Louisville
Jeffrey Modell Foundation
Joint Advocacy Coalition of the ACTS and CR Forum
Le Bonheur Children's Hospital
Life Technologies
Lupus Foundation of America
March of Dimes
Marfan Foundation
Massachusetts General Hospital
Massachusetts Neuropsychological Society
Mayo Clinic
McLean Hospital
Medical College of Wisconsin
Medical Library Association
Melanoma Research Alliance
Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation
Michigan State University
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research

National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Fragile X Foundation
National Primate Research Centers
National Psoriasis Foundation
Norris Cotton Cancer Center at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
NYU Langone Medical Center
Oregon Health & Science University
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Parkinson's Action Network
Partners Continuing Care and Spaulding Rehabilitation Network
Partners HealthCare
Penn Medicine
Penn State College of Medicine
Population Association of America/Association of Population Centers
The Psychonomic Society
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Research!America
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Saint Francis Care
Saint Louis University
Scleroderma Foundation
Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation
Sleep Research Society
The Society for Industrial & Organizational Psychology (SIOP)
Society for Judgment and Decision Making
Society for Neuroscience
Society for Pediatric Research
Society for Research in Psychopathology
Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR)
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Society of Experimental Social Psychology
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society of Hospital Medicine
Stanford University School of Medicine
Temple University School of Medicine
Tulane University
UCLA
United for Medical Research
University at Buffalo
University of California Berkeley
University of California Irvine
University of California Davis
University of California Merced
University of California Riverside
University of California San Diego
University of California, San Francisco

University of California Santa Cruz
University of California System
University of California Santa Barbara
University of Central Florida
University of Cincinnati
University of Kentucky
University of Massachusetts Medical School
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
University of Rochester Medical Center
University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine
University of Texas System
University of Utah
University of Washington
U. S. Hereditary Angioedema Association
UNM Health Sciences Center
USAgainstAlzheimer's
UT MD Anderson Cancer Center
Washington University in St. Louis
The Wistar Institute