

July 19, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Blunt and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro:

We commend you for allocating \$34 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the FY 2017 omnibus bill – a \$2 billion increase from FY 2016 shows your commitment towards advancing medical and dental research that impacts countless lives and facets of the medical profession. The undersigned 23 medical and dental societies encourage your strong support of the NIH during the Fiscal Year 2018 appropriations process, and urge allocation of an additional \$2 billion for the NIH to ensure the U.S. remains competitive in medical and dental innovation.

While the NIH enjoys bipartisan support in Congress, it concerns us that the President's proposed FY 2018 Budget would reduce NIH spending by at least 20 percent. The National Cancer Institute would see a \$1 billion cut, while The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute would be reduced by \$575 million, and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases would see a reduction of \$838 million. These unprecedented cuts would set the agency's budget back to below 2003 levels, leading to the disruption of research resulting in years, if not decades, of setbacks to our nation's research workforce and infrastructure.

Rising deficits and spending caps present a difficult budget environment, but we ask you to look beyond just one fiscal year. Sustained increases in funding for research, surveillance, and healthy lifestyle promotion through the NIH will not only save lives, but save health care costs in the long term. Medical and dental research nurtures economic growth by creating jobs and new technologies, which in turn will produce billions of dollars in Medicare and Medicaid savings over the next decade.

The medical and dental specialty groups listed below represent a wide array of physicians and dentists concerned about their patients' futures and how to best combat life-threatening illnesses, many of which are rare and have little to no treatment. We respectfully ask you to help us provide the highest quality healthcare by prioritizing NIH medical research funding. Thank you for your continued commitment towards innovation and discovery.

Sincerely,

American Academy of Dermatology Association
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Ophthalmology
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons
American College of Cardiology
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Osteopathic Association
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Echocardiography
American Society of Nuclear Cardiology
American Society of Radiation Oncology
American Urological Association
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Heart Failure Society of America
Large Urology Group Practice Association
North American Spine Society
Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions
Society for Vascular Surgery