

March 6, 2008

Support Medical Research in Your District

Sign the bipartisan letter to the Appropriators urging a 6.5% increase in NIH funding for Fiscal Year 2009

Current co-sponsors (73): Neil Abercrombie, Jason Altmire, Tammy Baldwin, Melissa Bean, Shelley Berkley, Howard L. Berman, Leonard Boswell, Nancy Boyda, Bruce Braley, Lois Capps, Christopher P. Carney, Wm. Lacy Clay, Steve Cohen, Elijah Cummings, Diana DeGette, Keith Ellison, Eliot Engel, Anna Eshoo, Bob Etheridge, Bob Filner, Elton Gallegly, Gabrielle Giffords, Al Green, John Hall, Brian Higgins, Maurice Hinchey, Rush Holt, Sheila Jackson-Lee, William Jefferson, Eddie Bernice Johnson, Hank Johnson, Dale E. Kildee, Ron Kind, Ron Klein, Dennis Kucinich, James R. Langevin, Rick Larsen, Sander Levin, Dave Loebsack, Carolyn B. Maloney, Doris O. Matsui, Carolyn McCarthy, Jim McDermott, Mike McIntyre, Michael Michaud, Brad Miller, Dennis Moore, Patrick Murphy, Jerrold Nadler, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Donald Payne, Steve Pearce, Ed Perlmutter, Todd Platts, Earl Pomeroy, Jon C. Porter, Deborah Pryce, Jim Ramstad, Silvestre Reyes, Linda Sanchez, Bobby Scott, Albio Sires, Louise Slaughter, Adam Smith, Vic Snyder, Betty Sutton, Fred Upton, Chris Van Hollen, Tim Walz, Henry Waxman, Robert Wexler, Lynn Woolsey, David Wu

Dear Colleague,

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) are our country's preeminent research institutions, and represent our greatest hope for finding cures and treatments for the chronic diseases and debilitating conditions that afflict millions of Americans. NIH research is also an essential factor in containing soaring medical costs that threaten the viability of our nation's health care system.

Since the doubling ended in 2003, funding for NIH has failed to keep pace with biomedical inflation. As a result, the NIH has lost more than 15% of its purchasing power.

As you are aware, the Administration's budget request proposed funding NIH-supported research at the FY08 enacted level. This flat funding for the NIH is deeply troubling given the high rate of biomedical inflation. The US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) estimates that in Fiscal Year 2009, the NIH budget will need to increase by 3.5% simply to maintain its existing purchasing power.

If we are to improve the health of Americans and improve the quality of their longer lives, Congress must make FY09 the beginning of an annual commitment by the Congress to provide adequate funding for health research.

For more information or to co-sign the attached bipartisan letter, please contact Josh Lumbley Joshua.lumbley@mail.house.gov (Markey, 5-2836) or Jason Edgar Jason.edgar@mail.house.gov (Reichert, 5-7761).

Sincerely,

Rep. Edward J. Markey

Rep. David G. Reichert

Rep. Janice Schakowsky

Rep. Christopher Shays

Rep. Joe Courtney

Rep. Christopher Smith

March 6, 2008

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 LHOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

As you work to finalize the Fiscal Year 2009 Appropriations bills, we respectfully request you to allocate a 6.5% increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The National Institutes of Health are our country's preeminent research institutions, and represent our greatest hope for finding cures and treatments for the chronic diseases and debilitating conditions that afflict millions of Americans. NIH research is also an essential factor in containing soaring medical costs that threaten the viability of our nation's health care system.

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Unfortunately, we have already seen the negative impact on biomedical research when the NIH budget fails to account for increases in inflation. In the short term, this amounts to a reduced number of NIH-funded grants awarded around the country each year. More broadly, inadequate funding for biomedical research delays or ends cutting-edge research, making it more difficult to retain talented American researchers in the United States. Even worse, flat funding further impedes our ability to mitigate or delay the onset of the chronic diseases, which are the greatest contributor to spiraling health care costs.

We understand the challenges facing the Appropriations Committee and the difficulty of addressing priority issues in a time of limited resources. Nonetheless, as you craft this year's Appropriations package, we urge you to consider the wide-ranging positive impact that adequate NIH funding can have on Americans' quality of life and the long-term cost-savings it can produce. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,