

The NHLBI Constituency Group

Adult Congenital Heart Association
Alliance for Aging Research
Alpha-1 Association
Alpha-1 Foundation
American Association for Respiratory Care
American Association for Thoracic Surgery
AABB
America's Blood Centers
American College of Cardiology
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Red Cross
American Society of Nephrology
American Thoracic Society
American Vascular Association Foundation
Association of Black Cardiologists
Association of Minority Health Professions Schools
Children's Cardiomyopathy Foundation, Inc.

Cooley's Anemia Foundation
COPD Foundation
Heart Rhythm Society
Hemophilia Federation of America
Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Association
Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
Mended Hearts, Inc.
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Marfan Foundation
National Sleep Foundation
Pediatric Congenital Heart Association
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Sleep Research Society
Society for Vascular Surgery
Society of Interventional Radiology
WOMEN'S HEART ALLIANCE
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women
with Heart Disease

March 23, 2015

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman, Labor-HHS-ED Subcm.
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Labor-HHS-ED Subcm.
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

The 36 member organizations of the NHLBI Constituency Group urge you to include in the FY 2016 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriation bill \$33 billion for the National Institutes of Health and provide \$3.3 billion for NIH's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

A funding level of this amount would allow the NIH to begin to restore its purchasing power. During the last decade, the NIH budget has not kept pace with medical research inflation, resulting in more than a 20% loss in purchasing power. This funding level would also permit the NIH to capitalize on its ability to enhance health, create jobs, boost economic growth and innovation and promote science. Stable and sustained funding will help secure a solid return on Congress' investment in the NIH.

The NHLBI has a long history of achievements in improving the health of your constituents. Over the past 67 years, the NHLBI has made important progress in the treatment and prevention of heart disease, stroke, asthma, emphysema, sickle cell disease, Cooley's anemia, diabetes, sleep disorders and other diseases. However, challenges remain because heart, lung, blood, and blood vessel diseases account for nearly 41% of all deaths in the United States. These diseases kill more than 1 million Americans each year and cost our nation an estimated \$442 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity in 2011.

As the worldwide leader in research on heart, lung, blood, and blood vessel diseases as well as sleep disorders, the NHLBI effectively translates research results to the American public. An FY 2016 appropriation of \$3.3 billion for the NHLBI would allow the Institute to enhance current programs and pursue promising planned innovative basic, clinical, translational, and prevention research initiatives to better diagnose, treat and prevent these diseases.

A number of breakthroughs are on the horizon for heart, lung, blood, and blood vessel diseases as well as sleep disorders. Now is the time to invest in research to combat these diseases. Thank you.

Sincerely,

The NHLBI Constituency Group