

# United for Medical Research



July 24, 2014

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
United States Senate  
731 Senate Hart Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Harkin:

United for Medical Research (UMR) offers our support for the *Accelerating Biomedical Research Act* and the additional funding it provides for lifesaving medical research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). As a coalition of leading research institutions, patient and health advocates, scientific organizations, and private industry, united in seeking steady increases in funding for NIH, we applaud your innovative leadership in pursuit of stable funding growth for this critical agency, even as the broader federal budget debate remains at an impasse.

As the world's premier biomedical research agency, NIH is at the nexus of the medical innovation ecosystem, which includes 300,000 researchers supported at nearly 3,000 institutions nationwide. NIH-funded discoveries have led to astounding improvements in human health and serve as a beacon of hope for millions of patients suffering from devastating diseases and injuries. Moreover, NIH is an economic engine that has given rise to an American-led, globally competitive life sciences industry, which supports more than seven million high-wage American jobs and contributes \$69 billion annually to the U.S. gross domestic product.

Unfortunately, following a decade of NIH budgets that have failed to keep pace with inflation and an additional cut of \$1.5 billion due to sequestration, which have resulted in a more than 20 percent loss in purchasing power, we are at serious risk of losing our life science preeminence and squandering our most promising scientific opportunities. As you know, global competition is intensifying as China, Germany, India, Singapore, Sweden, the United Kingdom and others recognize that the life sciences represent a high growth industry and actively seek to wrest this leadership from the United States. This funding trend is creating an innovation deficit, and UMR is gravely concerned that if it is not reversed, this deficit will have long-term and devastating consequences for maintaining our competitive edge as the global leader in medical research.

Despite this grim context, it is an extraordinarily exciting time for biomedical research. Scientists are making advances at an unprecedented pace, and there is strong, vocal support for NIH from both sides of the political spectrum and from the American public. UMR believes it is time to capitalize on these opportunities and consider how to best preserve and expand our investment in medical research even in fiscally challenging

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## UMR MEMBERS

American Association  
for Cancer Research

American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network

American Diabetes Association

American Heart Association

Association of American  
Universities

Association of Public and  
Land-grant Universities

BD

Biotechnology Industry  
Organization

Boston University

Corning

FasterCures

Harvard University

Johns Hopkins University

Massachusetts Institute of  
Technology

Melanoma Research Alliance

Northwestern University

Pancreatic Cancer Action  
Network

PhRMA

Research!America

Stanford University

The Endocrine Society

Thermo Fisher Scientific

University of Pennsylvania

University of Southern  
California

Vanderbilt University

Washington University  
in St. Louis

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times. The *Accelerating Biomedical Research Act* would do just that: provide a sustainable funding pathway for NIH. We look forward to working with you to advance this bill.

Sincerely,

United for Medical Research