



April 28, 2025

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

Dear Chair Collins and Ranking Member Murray:

On behalf of **United for Medical Research (UMR)**, a coalition of America's leading research institutions, private industry, and patient advocates, I want to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the remarkable and unmistakable value that the National Institutes of Health delivers for every community across our nation.

While we understand the Trump Administration's objective to achieve greater structural efficiencies at the Department of Health and Human Services, we believe maintaining the longstanding commitment to strong NIH funding by the Senate Appropriations Committee is of paramount importance to the country. We urge the committee to ensure a responsible and sustainable path for NIH by providing a base budget of at least \$51.3 billion in fiscal year 2026 (FY 2026) appropriations.

With your leadership and support, Congress has over the past nine years helped NIH catch up to its unmatched potential after a decade of flat funding. However, if NIH once again experiences flat funding or a cut to its base level budget, it will severely undermine three major national priorities: the health of the nation; economic progress; and America's standing as the global leader of biomedical research.

The Health of the Nation

Every state in the country is the beneficiary of NIH grants and every community in the country benefits from breakthrough discoveries that began with a NIH research grant.

Recent life-saving advances grounded in NIH-funded research include:

- The development of **Naloxone nasal spray** that now enables bystanders and emergency responders alike to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

UMR Members

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Alzheimer's Association
American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Cancer Society
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- Two new types of **drugs to treat diabetes**, GLP-1 receptor agonists and SGLT2 inhibitors. Diabetes is a leading cause of death in the United States and significantly increases the risk that someone will develop heart disease – the number one cause of death. The new classes of drugs also hold promise for treating other conditions.
- **Decreases in cancer death rates**, including a nearly 20 percent drop in the death rate for melanoma – the most serious type of skin cancer – due to the availability of new targeted therapies and immunotherapies. And a 55 percent decrease in death rates from colorectal cancer resulting from better screening technologies and treatments.

Another example of our highly productive public-private enterprise is the partnership of NIH's National Cancer Institute and Thermo Fisher Scientific on an **umbrella trial** to leverage next generation sequencing technology in treating acute myeloid leukemia blood cancers. By accelerating the process of understanding the genetic changes underlying these aggressive cancers, patients can be quickly matched to clinical trials and treatments giving them a much better chance of survival.

These types of groundbreaking research are playing out in every region across the United States, giving patients and families hope for better treatments and even cures for our most vexing and devastating diseases. Pulling back NIH's resources now will greatly reduce our biomedical research community's ability to deliver the scientific breakthroughs Americans are looking for and deserve.

Economic Engine

In addition to the invaluable and incalculable health benefits NIH provides all Americans, the agency also is an unmistakable economic engine. In March, UMR released the 2025 update of its **annual analysis** of the economic impact of research funding from the NIH, which shows that the \$36.94 billion awarded to researchers in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia in FY 2024 supported 407,782 jobs and \$94.58 billion in new economic activity nationwide — or \$2.56 for every \$1 invested. Another **UMR analysis** looks at the exponential impact NIH research has in rural states.

Other ways NIH research fuels the economy:

- NIH research attracts innovation-intensive businesses with good-paying jobs, helping communities establish innovation corridors and supporting regional economic development and revitalization efforts.
- NIH research is the preeminent training ground for scientists and physicians, producing a highly skilled workforce and supporting American industries.
- NIH takes on massive research endeavors – like the **Human Genome Project** (HGP) and **The BRAIN Initiative** – that aren't something industry can or would do but have revolutionized our understanding of human genetics and brain function. U.S. leadership in these areas has not only **improved health** but spawned entire new industries from which the U.S. benefits. It has been estimated that, within a decade of completion, the return on the federal government's investment in the HGP was **141:1**.

There is no better investment in the U.S. than one that saves lives and supports local economies.

Global Leadership

The United States is the global leader in biomedical research. Its dominance in key areas including gene sequencing, cancer drug discovery, and cutting-edge medical technologies is not an accident. It is the result of a highly successful **biomedical innovation ecosystem**, which is anchored by the NIH and a unique partnership with American research universities, companies, and patient advocacy groups to conduct research and move discoveries from the lab to the marketplace where they can benefit patients.

Examples of America's leadership:

- No country has received more **Nobel Prizes** in areas related to health and medicine than the United States – and NIH research is behind almost all of these awards.
- The United States is the **largest pharmaceutical manufacturing country** in the world producing medicines worth over \$500 billion – three times that of Germany, our closest competitor.
- The U.S. is the leading exporter of medical technologies, where **exports of medtech consistently outpace imports**.

Other countries see the success of our biomedical innovation ecosystem and are poised to capitalize on disinvestments in U.S. research. **The United States ranks only third** among the top eight most research-intensive countries in the world. In fact, because of the current uncertainty surrounding NIH's budget, it has been reported that some European countries and China are **actively recruiting American scientists** to help their biomedical research enterprises compete and possibly overtake the U.S. as global leader.

As Senate leaders and strong, longtime supporters of the basic research mission of the NIH, patients and families from every community – rural and urban – need your help. By providing NIH with a base program level of at least \$51.3 billion for FY 2026, Congress will be investing in more cures and more life-saving treatments, while supporting the economy and preserving America's global leadership in biomedical research.

Thank you again for your leadership and for the opportunity to provide valuable input into the Labor-HHS subcommittee's important FY 2026 deliberations.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Leach
President, United for Medical Research