

November XX, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

As the House begins crafting appropriations legislation before the current continuing resolution expires on December 12, 2014, we write to express our deep concern with the current funding level provided for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In any continuing resolution or omnibus appropriations package for FY 2015, we urge you to work with your colleagues in the Senate to fully restore NIH funding to at least the agency's pre-sequester level, adjusted for inflation, in order to maintain America's role as a global leader in biomedical research and ground-breaking medical discoveries.

We are concerned that, over the last 10 years, the federal government's contributions toward basic research at NIH have consistently failed to keep pace with inflation. By failing to at least hold NIH funding constant with other rising costs, Congress has allowed the agency's purchasing power to diminish by more than 20 percent since 2003. Irresponsible budget cuts imposed on the agency during sequestration only further exacerbated this trend, reducing NIH's budget by an additional 5 percent in FY 2013. As the growth in other countries' investments in medical research continues to far outpace those made here in the U.S., it is more critical than ever that we act to reverse this trend.

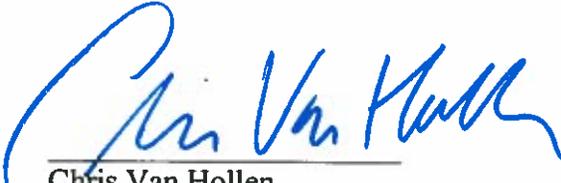
Insufficient funding for NIH has a serious, wide-ranging impact on our nation's health and our capacity for medical innovation in the 21st century. If we are serious about breaking new ground in our understanding of complex diseases like Alzheimer's and cancer, and if we hope to accelerate the speed with which new cures, treatments and vaccines are developed – goals that are supported by Congressional leaders of both parties – then it's absolutely essential that we increase funding for medical research at NIH. Particularly given our constituents' renewed focus in recent months on developing vaccines and treatments for diseases like Ebola and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), we feel strongly that now is the time to invest in our nation's long-term health and prosperity.

While we understand the difficult fiscal challenges you face, we urge you to prioritize the important role that NIH plays in biomedical research and economic growth by working to fully

restore its funding to at least pre-sequester levels, adjusted for inflation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress

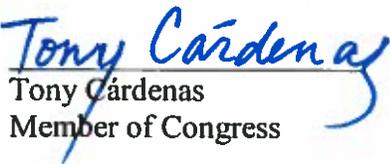


Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress

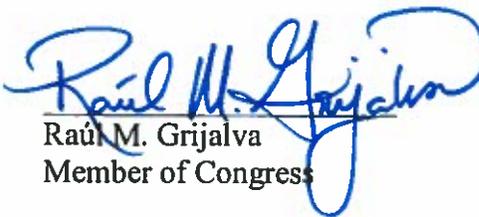


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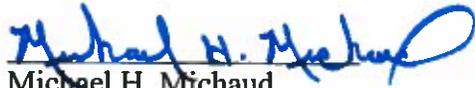
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