Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 21, 2011

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Norman Dicks
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS & Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Rehberg and Ranking Members Dicks and DeLauro:

As Members of Congress who strongly value the role of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in job creation, economic growth, and bettering the lives of millions of Americans, we respectfully request a funding level of at least $32 billion for FY 2012. We feel this level is absolutely vital in order for NIH to sustain its mission of improving health through medical science breakthroughs and maintaining international leadership in science and biomedical research.

Every family is one phone call or doctor's visit away from needing the promise of NIH research. With federal funding of at least $32 billion, NIH can continue to serve as the world's preeminent medical research institution and our nation's best hope for finding cures, improving treatments, and gaining a better understanding of the complex causes of diseases that affect millions of Americans. NIH researchers are making groundbreaking progress against major diseases and conditions, like finding better methods of early detection for Alzheimer's Disease, lung cancer, heart disease, and stroke, as well as improving treatment for substance abuse. And in FY2012, NIH will continue an innovative program to speed the translation of basic scientific discoveries into therapies and treatments that benefit patients.

NIH is also a key pillar of our economic recovery, generating high-paying jobs in the cutting-edge biomedical research industry and keeping America competitive in biomedical science. More than 80 percent of NIH's budget supports over 350,000 scientist and research personnel, as well as the acquisition of goods and services from every state.

Through NIH, we are also training the next generation of researchers who will maintain America's ability to advance medical science and protect our competitive edge in this field. Robust investment in NIH is vital if we want to discover the next medical breakthrough in America and not import it from China or India.

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While some of us, as well as many patient advocates and biomedical researchers, feel that $35 billion is what is truly needed to sustain NIH's research and public health missions, we understand the unprecedented budgetary constraints faced by the Appropriations Committee. In light of the difficult decisions ahead, we want to stress the importance of NIH as a job creator, a driver of economic growth, and a vital tool in curbing our nation's soaring healthcare costs. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Rep. Edward J. Markey

Rep. Jason Altmire

Rep. Rob Andrews

Rep. Tammy Baldwin

Rep. Karen Bass

Rep. Shelley Berkley

Rep. Howard L. Berman

Rep. Earl Blumenaur

Rep. Madeleine Bordallo

Rep. Leonard Boswell

Rep. Robert Brady

Rep. Bruce Braley

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