

August 21, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

Thank you for your continued support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which has resulted in immense benefits for the health of the American people. We are grateful that both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have proposed a funding increase for the NIH in the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bills. Additionally, we want to raise to your attention a significant concern the 175 undersigned organizations and institutions have with the House committee's proposal to reduce the salary limit imposed on extramural researchers funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to Level III of the Executive pay scale.

Section 203 of the FY 2016 Labor-HHS appropriations bill passed by the House Appropriations Committee on June 24 would reduce the salary limit from Executive Level II to Executive Level III (\$168,700 in 2015), a cut of \$14,600 (8 percent). This cut, which follows a \$20,000 (10 percent) cut in the FY 2012 funding bill, comes at a time when research institutions' discretionary funds from clinical revenues and other sources are increasingly constrained and less available to invest in research. As institutions and departments draw further from internal funds to compensate for the reduction in the salary limit, they will have less funding for critical activities such as providing bridge funding to investigators between grants and supporting seed grants and start-up packages for young investigators. In 2013, a recently published study found that for each dollar of external research support medical schools receive they invest an additional \$0.53.

Lowering the extramural salary limit particularly disadvantages the most productive investigators who have a sustained track record in breakthrough discoveries, and will have a chilling effect on research institutions' ability to recruit and retain the most gifted new investigators. Moreover, cutting the salary limit disproportionately affects physician investigators and serves as a deterrent to their recruitment into research careers at a time when NIH has raised concerns about too few new physicians entering research careers. Since the Federal government imposed the salary cap on extramural researchers in 1990, medical schools, teaching hospitals, universities, and independent research institutes increasingly have been forced to bear more of the costs of physician-scientists' and other investigators' salaries, detracting from their investments in groundbreaking research.

It is essential to our nation's long-term health and standing in the global environment that we adopt policies to ensure that America retains the most talented, productive, and diverse group of biomedical and behavioral researchers. This is not the time to step back.

Retaining the extramural salary limit at Executive Level II will help institutions continue to attract and retain the most talented investigators in our research programs. We urge you to oppose reducing the salary limit to Executive Level III when you consider the FY 2016 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
Academy of Radiology Research  
AcademyHealth  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Allen Institute  
Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM)  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Dental Research  
The American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
The American College of Rheumatology  
American Pediatric Society  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society of Nephrology  
Associated Medical Schools of New York  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of American Cancer Institutes  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Independent Research Institutes  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Pathology Chairs  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Banner Research  
Baylor College of Medicine  
Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston  
Boston University School of Medicine  
Buck Institute for Research on Aging  
Case Western Reserve University  
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center  
Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University of Health and Science  
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center  
The Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory  
Columbia University  
Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals  
Cooper Medical School of Rowan University  
Cornell University  
Council on Governmental Relations  
Creighton University School of Medicine  
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute  
Donald Danforth Plant Science Center  
Duke University  
East Carolina University – Brody School of Medicine  
Eastern Virginia Medical School  
Florida Atlantic University, Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine  
Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC)  
Florida International University  
Florida State University College of Medicine  
The Forsyth Institute  
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center  
George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences  
HIV Medicine Association  
Indiana University  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Institute for Systems Biology  
J. Craig Venter Institute  
The J. David Gladstone Institutes  
The Jackson Laboratory  
John B. Pierce Laboratory, Inc.  
Johns Hopkins University  
Joslin Diabetes Center  
Kessler Foundation  
Lahey Hospital & Medical Center  
Loyola University Chicago

Magee-Womens Research Institute  
Mayo Clinic  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center  
Michigan State University  
Michigan State University College of Human Medicine  
Monell Chemical Senses Center  
Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory  
Neuropsychiatric Research Institute  
New York Medical College  
Northeast Ohio Medical University  
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine  
NYU Langone Medical Center  
Ochsner Clinic Foundation  
The Ohio State University  
Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF)  
The Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine  
Oregon Health & Science University  
Oregon Research Institute  
Pacific Health Research and Education Institute  
Pacific Northwest Diabetes Research Institute  
Partners Health Care  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Penn State University  
Perelman School of Medicine  
Population Association of America  
The Public Health Institute  
The Rockefeller University  
Roswell Park Cancer Institute  
Rush University Medical Center  
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey  
Saint Louis University  
The Salk Institute for Biological Studies  
Sanford Burnham Prebys Medical Discovery Institute  
The Scripps Research Institute  
Seattle Children's Research Institute  
Society for Neuroscience  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine  
The State University of New York  
SUNY Upstate Medical University at Syracuse  
Texas A&M Health Science Center  
Texas Biomedical Research Institute  
Texas Heart Institute  
Translational Genomic Research Institute

Tufts Medical Center  
Tufts University School of Medicine  
Tulane University  
Tulane University School of Medicine  
UC San Diego Health  
University at Buffalo  
University of Arizona  
University of California  
University of California, Davis  
University of California, Merced  
University of California, San Francisco  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of Chicago Medical Center  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Colorado Boulder  
University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus  
University of Hawaii, The John A. Burns School of Medicine and UH Cancer Center  
University of Iowa  
University of Kansas Medical Center  
University of Louisville School of Medicine  
The University of Maryland, Baltimore  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
University of Michigan Medical School  
The University of Miami  
University of Minnesota  
University of Missouri System  
University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine  
University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine  
University of Nebraska Medical Center  
University of New Mexico  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences  
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center  
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Rochester  
University of South Florida Health  
University of Southern California  
University of Tennessee Health Science Center  
University of Texas Health Science Center  
University of Texas School of Medicine San Antonio  
The University of Texas System  
University of Virginia  
The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University  
The Wistar Institute  
University of Washington

University of Wisconsin Health  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
UTMB School of Medicine  
Van Andel Research Institute  
Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine  
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center  
Washington State University  
Washington University in St. Louis  
Wayne State University School of Medicine  
Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution  
Wright State University  
Yale University School of Medicine