



December 2, 2014

U. S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The undersigned organizations of the Coalition to Promote Research ([CPR](#)) write to express our continued and strong support for the competitive peer review process used by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The NIH is the premier biomedical and behavioral research institution in the world with a mission to support science to improve health and well-being within the United States and globally. More than 83 percent of NIH funding is awarded through the [peer review process](#) to more than 300,000 researchers and 3,000 universities, medical schools, and research institutions in all 50 states. We stand united in our support for the NIH, its mission, and its world-renowned peer review process.

We are extremely concerned about the recent criticism of the NIH's funding decisions and the accompanying mischaracterization of NIH-supported research in the media and by some in Congress. The ongoing targeting of specific grants produces a chilling effect across the entire scientific community. These attacks inhibit the very scientific progress the critics claim to support. Our organizations strongly oppose these mischaracterizations and the associated undue criticism of the NIH peer review process.

The NIH's peer review process, which is rigorous and highly competitive, rates applications to determine which are most likely to advance science. Even then, highly rated projects are only chosen for funding by the institutes if they clearly reflect program priorities or fit the institutes' mission. After those two criteria are met, there is still a final review conducted by the national advisory councils of the institutes and centers.

These national advisory councils include scientists from the research community along with public representatives who advise the institutes about program priorities. The councils must sign off before any grants are funded. These processes, developed and honed over many years, have made NIH the premier health research agency in the world. The research that emerges from these competitive processes is scientifically meritorious and relevant to public health.

NIH's research priorities are driven primarily by the science and by researchers in laboratories, hospitals, and academic medical centers. However, Institute directors, staff, and advisory council members also consider the burden of diseases, the public health needs of society, existing scientific opportunities,

experience of the applicant, and the ability of the investigator to sustain research through adequate staffing and infrastructure.

We agree Congress has an oversight role in ensuring that the funding provided to federal agencies is used in accordance with an agency's mission. This oversight is essential. It is also essential that the scientific process determine project selection. We encourage Congress to resist efforts to undermine the NIH and its peer review process. It is not in the best interest of the American public.

CPR is a coalition of national organizations committed to promoting public health, innovation, and fundamental knowledge through scientific research. Our organizations represent hundreds of thousands of scientists, physicians, health care providers, and patients who support federal investments in basic and applied biomedical and behavioral research. We thank you for your time and look forward to working with Congress in the future.

Sincerely,

Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research
AcademyHealth
ACRIA
Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research
American Anthropological Association
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Brain Coalition
American College of Clinical Pharmacology
American Educational Research Association
American Gastroenterological Association
American Pediatric Society
American Physiological Society
American Psychological Association
American Society for Nutrition
American Society of Hematology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Archaeological Institute of America
Associated Medical Schools of New York
Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback
Association for Surgical Education
Association of Academic Departments of Otolaryngology
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL)
Association of Academic Psychiatrists
Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of American Universities
Association of Anatomy Cell Biology and Neurobiology Chairs
Association of Independent Research Institutes
Association of Medical School Microbiology and Immunology Chairs
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs (AMSPDC)
Association of Population Centers
Association of Professors of Dermatology
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of University Radiologists
Berkeley Population Center
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University
Center on Aging at NORC at the University of Chicago
Coalition for Life Sciences
Coalition for the Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Sciences Research
Cognitive Science Society
Columbia University Medical Center
Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cooley's Anemia Foundation
Crime & Justice Policy Coalition (CJPA)
Duke University School of Medicine
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)
George Mason University
History of Science Society
HIV Medicine Association
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society
Indiana University
Infectious Diseases Society of America
Institute for Social Science Research, University of Massachusetts
Institute for Women's Policy Research
Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research
JNCL-NCLIS
Law & Society Association
Linguistic Society of America
Midwest Political Science Association
Midwest Sociological Society
Morehouse School of Medicine
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Association of Social Workers

National Communication Association
New York University Silver School of Social Work
NYU Langone Medical Center
NYU School of Medicine
Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWBSM)
Penn Medicine
Penn State University
Population Association of America
Population Research Center, University of Texas at Austin
Psychonomic Society
Public Health Institute
Research!America
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
RTI International
Social Science Research Council
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM)
Society for Computers in Psychology
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP)
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Society for Prevention Research
Society for Psychophysiological Research
Society for Research in Child Development
Society for Research in Psychopathology
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Society of Experimental Social Psychology
Society of General Internal Medicine
Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology
Society of University Urologists
Society of Urology Chairpersons and Program Directors
Southeast Community Research Center (SCRC)
Southern Sociological Society
Stanford University
Stony Brook University
The Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University
The Miriam Hospital and Brown University
The Ohio State University
UC Berkeley Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging
UC San Diego Health System
UMSL-CCJ
University of California

University of California Berkeley
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Merced
University of California, Riverside
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Iowa Health Care
University of Missouri - St. Louis
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine
University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Science
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health
Washington University in St. Louis
Weill Cornell Medical College
Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine
Yale University
Yale University, School of Public Health