



November 21, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leaders Thune, Schumer and Jeffries:

On behalf of United for Medical Research (UMR), a coalition of America's leading research institutions, private industry, and patient advocates, we urge Congress to pass a FY2026 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill with robust funding for NIH as soon as possible to ensure that breakthrough discoveries for cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease, diabetes, ALS and other vexing diseases do not stall or get derailed completely.

It is encouraging to learn that the Labor-HHS Appropriations bill is likely to be included in the next tranche of funding bills to get Senate floor consideration. And while all appropriations bills are extremely important, the Labor-HHS bill impacts the health and well-being of every community, especially by funding the National Institutes of Health. NIH sits at the center of America's vaunted biomedical innovation ecosystem, facilitating and conducting lifesaving research, fueling critical U.S. industries, and supporting our national security.

NIH also plays a critical role in building the next generation of biomedical innovators. Each year, countless scientists, industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and clinicians receive invaluable training and mentorship through NIH-funded research. Earlier this year, UMR invited researchers to tell us why a strongly funded NIH is so important. Simply put, they told us that NIH funding has meant everything to their careers, that they care deeply about training and mentoring the next generation, and they stress the importance of the United States maintaining its stature as the best place in the world to do science, and what that will mean for health, society, and our economy. You can read their accounts, along with those of patients and others touched by NIH research, [here](#).

Many lifesaving treatments and cures in the research pipeline are dependent on enactment of the NIH funding level of the Senate FY2026 Labor-HHS appropriations bill, and we urge the House and Senate to send this legislation to the President's desk before the end of the year. Patients and their families in every community are counting on it.

UMR Members

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American Association for Cancer Research
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
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University of Pennsylvania
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Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Washington University in St. Louis

Strong, sustainable and predictable funding is critical to the NIH and the medical research it supports. And while short-term continuing resolutions are very hard on biomedical research, a long-term or year-long CR can reduce funding for active research projects across the country and delay or even kill the ultimate success of that research. Moreover, CRs can also delay the start of critical new research initiatives due to the uncertainty of the funding levels.

Thank you for your leadership and we implore you to make FY2026 Labor-HHS appropriations a top priority for passage in the upcoming weeks. NIH's lifesaving mission is needed now more than ever.

Sincerely,

Caitlin M. Leach
Senior Director of Federal Relations, Northwestern University
President, United for Medical Research

Jaren Love
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Treasurer, United for Medical Research

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Sally Guthrie
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Christina West
Associate Vice Chancellor for Federal Relations, Vanderbilt University
Board Member, United for Medical Research

Alexander Sutton
Director, Federal Advocacy, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS-CAN)
Board Member, United for Medical Research

cc: The Honorable Susan Collins
The Honorable Tom Cole
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro