



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 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 Physiatrists  
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