

June 21, 2019

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

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

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

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Members Murray and Cole:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing physicians, researchers, consumers and other stakeholders, thank you for your commitment to increasing funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.¹ As you work toward completion and passage of an FY2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations bill, we ask that you specifically prioritize the federal investment in women's health research through the NIH.

Women represent half of the US population. As such, conditions and diseases that are specific to women's health, or those that present differently in women than men, must be a priority for federally-funded research. Although significant changes in research design and practice have increased the proportion of women included in research trials in the recent past, knowledge gaps remain because of a continued lack of adequate inclusion of women, including women of color, and especially those who are pregnant or breastfeeding. Prioritizing the inclusion of women in clinical trials is necessary to provide the best evidence-based care for women. Further efforts are needed to ensure that research is designed to include representation of all potentially affected individuals, including those in diverse and underserved populations who often are not fully represented in current study designs.

In addition to increased financial investment in women's health research in the FY2020 appropriations bill, we ask that you include Report Language aimed at ensuring we have an accurate account of current women's health research initiatives at NIH. We appreciate the inclusion of Report Language in the House bill and urge the Senate to mirror that language. Specifically, we ask that you call on NIH, under the leadership of the Office of Research on Women's Health and the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), to do the following: report on the total dollar amount of research invested in health conditions specific to women over the last ten years, including but not limited to pregnancy, gynecologic oncology, and infertility; provide a list of which

¹ Ehley, B. (2019, April 11). Senate appropriators aim to increase NIH budget. *Politico*, Retrieved from <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2019/04/senate-appropriators-aim-to-increase-nih-budget-3068846>

Institutes provide the highest amount of funding toward health research on conditions specific to women; and report on how and whether funding for research in this area is coordinated across the NIH.

We look forward to working with you toward our shared goal of increased federal funding for NIH, and specifically the enhanced investment in women's health research. Thank you for your consideration of this investment in the FY2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. For any questions or to discuss further, please don't hesitate to contact Katie Schubert at kschubert@smfm.org or Rachel Tetlow at rtetlow@acog.org.

Sincerely,

2020 Mom
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Sleep Medicine
AASM Foundation
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association for Dental Research
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American Gynecological & Obstetrical Society
American Organization for Nursing Leadership
American Urogynecologic Society (AUGS)
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
Endocrine Society
Magee-Womens Research Institute
March of Dimes
National PKU Alliance
North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology
Preeclampsia Foundation
RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association
Society of Family Planning
Society of Gynecologic Oncology
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine
Society for Reproductive Investigation
Society for the Study of Reproduction
Society of Toxicology
Society for Women's Health Research
Teratology Society