Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you prepare the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you renew the bipartisan commitment to improving the health of millions of Americans living with kidney diseases by including $25 million for KidneyX. This investment would build upon the success of prior KidneyX prize competitions and continue to accelerate the development of the world’s first artificial kidney and other technologies in an under-invested sector. We further request that your committee task the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) to coordinate with KidneyX in developing artificial organ technologies, building upon the innovation derisked by KidneyX and revolutionizing day-to-day life for people with kidney failure.

More than 37 million Americans live with kidney diseases. Within that group, more than 800,000 people live with kidney failure, for which there is no cure. The only treatments are dialysis or kidney transplant. Most Americans starting dialysis will die within five years. Though some are lucky enough to receive a transplant, 13 Americans die every day waiting for a kidney to become available to them. Additionally, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American populations are more likely to experience kidney failure, be on dialysis, struggle to find a suitable transplant, and have worse kidney function when dialysis or transplant care is initiated.

Developing an artificial kidney is critical to address the high cost of kidney diseases to Medicare and the American taxpayer. Medicare spends approximately $150 billion annually—over 18 percent of total spending—on patients with kidney diseases. Managing kidney failure alone accounts for over $50 billion of Medicare spending each year, representing 6% of Medicare’s budget on 1% of the Medicare population.

KidneyX is a public-private partnership between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) tasked with accelerating innovation in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of kidney diseases. To date, KidneyX has provided 75 awards across 6 prize competitions for innovations including the artificial kidney and xenotransplant.

Congress has regularly demonstrated its commitment to KidneyX by appropriating $25 million for the program since FY 2020. Private stakeholders have fully matched that funding by providing an additional $25 million. Since the launch of KidneyX in 2018, the program has also catalyzed approximately $400 million in capital from private and philanthropic sources toward kidney innovation.

For KidneyX to continue accelerating kidney health innovation, financial investment must increase. As KidneyX has derisked innovation for bioartificial kidneys for ARPA-H, with more funding, KidneyX could expand the number of innovators it supports, coordinate and catalyze investment, and accelerate the
development of transformative technologies. Furthermore, ARPA-H has a huge role to play in prioritizing research in this area to truly revolutionize organ transplantation.

Therefore, we respectfully request that you provide $25 million for KidneyX and report language urging ARPA-H to prioritize research on artificial organ technologies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress

Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress

André Carson
Member of Congress

Lloyd Smucker
Member of Congress

A. Drew Ferguson IV
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Elissa Slotkin
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Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Mike Kelly
Member of Congress

Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress