

November 13, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

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

Dear Chairman Cole, Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member DeLauro, and Ranking Member Murray:

The undersigned organizations are members of the Friends of NIDDK Advisory Committee. We are a coalition of professional societies and patient advocacy groups with a commitment to promoting and sustaining the vital research activities of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH). **On behalf of the Coalition leadership, we would like to reaffirm our support of a funding level of \$2.066 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 for the Institute as you move forward with the FY 2016 funding process.** This funding level is an increase of approximately 8% over FY 2015 enacted funding and a 6.2% increase over the President's FY 2016 budget request.

The Friends of NIDDK was established in 2013 with the vision of uniting organizations to speak with one voice about the important research being conducted by the Institute and to ensure that these critical dollars continue to increase in future years. The Friends of NIDDK works to educate Members of Congress about the scientific advances made through the Institute's ongoing research and the critical importance of increased federal funding for future scientific initiatives. In just the short time since its inception, over 45 national and local organizations have joined the Friends of NIDDK to rally their support for the Institute's activities.

The National Institutes of Health conducts and supports medical research and research training on diabetes and other endocrine and metabolic diseases; digestive diseases, nutritional disorders, and obesity; and kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases. Collectively these are some of the most common, yet costly, diseases impacting Americans.

For example, the nearly 30 million Americans that have diabetes and prediabetes cost the nation \$322 billion in 2012 alone. About 26 million American adults have chronic kidney disease and millions of others are at increased risk, although NIH investments in kidney research are less

than 1% of Medicare costs for kidney care. It is estimated that 1.4 million Americans suffer from Crohn's disease and Ulcerative Colitis and approximately 30,000 new cases diagnosed each year, creating a significant burden on the community and the economy: more than \$2.2 billion in direct and indirect costs annually in the United States. Urologic diseases affect people of all ages, result in significant health care expenditures, and may lead to substantial disability and impaired quality of life. These diseases represent only a portion of the NIDDK research portfolio, but underscore the need for continued investment. Researchers funded by NIDDK are collaborating and using innovative technology to discover cross-cutting solutions that will ultimately reduce health care costs and improve quality of life for millions of Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you in support of the work of NIDDK. Should you have any questions or require additional resources regarding NIDDK activities, please contact the Friends of NIDDK's Washington representative, Jim Twaddell, at Jim.Twaddell@dbr.com or (202) 230-5130.

Sincerely,

The Friends of NIDDK Advisory Committee:

American Diabetes Association

American Gastroenterological Association

American Society of Nephrology

American Urological Association

Digestive Disease National Coalition

JDRF

National Kidney Foundation