



March 23, 2023

Submitting Organization: Friends of the National Institute on Aging (FoNIA)

Subcommittee: House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

Department and/or Agency: National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging

Amount of Funding Requested: no less than \$50.924 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2024 for base spending at NIH for current institutes and operations

On behalf of the Friends of the National Institute on Aging (FoNIA), we are grateful for your leadership in advancing the mission of National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the research supported and conducted by the National Institute on Aging (NIA). FoNIA is a coalition of more than 50 academic, patient-centered and non-profit organizations supporting NIA's mission to understand the nature of aging and the aging process, and diseases and conditions associated with growing older to extend the healthy, active years of life.

We are writing to request that federal resources continue to be dedicated to sustaining and enhancing timely and promising aging research at NIA and across NIH.

Specifically, FoNIA requests:

- **no less than \$50.924 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2024 for base spending at NIH** for current institutes and operations, which corresponds with the overall recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research;
- we ask that **NIA**, as a component of the NIH, **receive a commensurate funding increase (7.3 percent over the FY 23 levels)** in FY 2024;
- continued funding to support the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) at NIH. However, **investment in ARPA-H should not come at the cost of the existing NIH institutes and centers conducting and supporting research on aging;**
- a minimum increase of **\$321 million above the final enacted amount for FY 2023 specific to research on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD)**. NIA is the primary federal agency supporting and conducting Alzheimer's disease and related dementias research.

NIA sponsors and conducts the vast majority of federal aging-related research, and this pioneering science contributes significantly to the improved care and quality of life for all of us as we age. A key NIA priority is translating research into better and more efficient care through the development of effective interventions that are disseminated to health care providers, patients, and caregivers. These interventions for the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of disease will help reduce declines in function and increased susceptibility to disease, frailty, or disability.

In the area of dementia, NIA supports vital research where scientific investigation is working to improve AD/ADRD prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care; basic science approaches to illuminate neurodegenerative mechanisms/pathways; and computational/biological systems approaches to identify, model and predict the architecture and dynamics of the molecular interactions underlying AD/ADRD pathogenesis. Researchers have identified new genetic, behavioral, and lifestyle risks and protective factors for dementias and developed improved diagnostic tools to pinpoint the cause of a person's dementia symptoms. As the U.S. federal government leader in medical research, NIH has expanded dementia research initiatives and resources including platforms for data sharing and interdisciplinary collaborations, new research models and methodologies, and policies to ensure our clinical trials reflect the diversity of our population.

The Science & Technology Action Committee estimates that the U.S. should double its R&D investment by 2026 in order to remain a global competitor in science, technology, engineering, and math.ⁱ A recent survey from Research!America, found that most Americans (91%) agree it is important for the US to be a global leader in science and technology and a bipartisan majority (63%) support paying an additional \$1 per week in taxes if they could be certain all the money would be spent on additional medical and health researchⁱⁱ. As the world's premier public funder of medical research, the NIH is a critical international leadership, and robust annual growth in support for NIH will be key to achieving these objectives.

Lastly, NIH funding provides a vital economic boost to local economies. Most of NIH/NIA funding is distributed as grants to universities and other research institutions across the United States, and acts as an economic engine and multiplier in local and regional communities. According to

United for Medical Research, total FY 22 NIH research spending supported more than 568,500 American jobs and generated nearly \$96.84 billion in economic activity, in all 50 states.ⁱⁱⁱ

Thanks to your support, NIH/NIA is continuing to accelerate scientific discoveries which will benefit us all as we age. Only through continued, and meaningful investments in NIH/NIA will it be possible to enhance the quality of care for older adults across the nation.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request. Should you need additional information, feel free to contact me at pdantonio@geron.org or 202-587-5880.

Sincerely,



Patricia M. D'Antonio, BSP Pharm, MS, MBA, BCGP

Chair, Friends of NIA

ⁱ Science & Technology Action Committee. (2022 January). *Briefing Paper: A Roadmap for Investment in Science and Technology*. <https://sciencetechaction.org/news-item/white-paper-a-roadmap-for-investment-in-science-and-technology/>

ⁱⁱ Research!America. (2023) *Survey of U.S. Adults conducted in partnership with Zogby Analytics*. <https://www.researchamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2023-January-National-Survey-Results-ResearchAmerica.pdf>. Accessed 3/21/2023.

ⁱⁱⁱ NIH's Role in Sustaining the U.S. Economy 2023 Update. https://unitedformedicalresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/UMR_NIHs-Role-in-Sustaining-the-U.S.-Economy-2023-Update.pdf. Accessed 3/21/2023.