

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2007

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
H-218 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

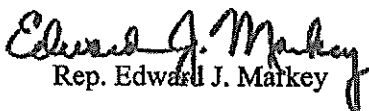
As you and your colleagues begin work on the Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations bills, we respectfully request that you provide at least a 6.7% increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health.

The National Institutes of Health is our country's premier institution for medical research. It embodies our greatest hope for treating or curing debilitating diseases like heart disease, cancer, diabetes and so many other illnesses that American families battle every day. It is also our best hope for containing the health care costs of the Baby Boomers. A large portion of the projected increase in health care expenditures over the next two decades can be explained by demographic changes and the escalating costs associated with Alzheimer's, stroke, cystic fibrosis, multiple sclerosis muscular dystrophy and other chronic diseases. If we don't act now, the chronic disease and its economic costs will bankrupt us over the next 25 years. We must invest in research today that will yield the cures tomorrow.

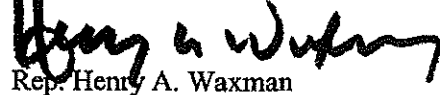
The extraordinary effort to double the investment in NIH has yielded an unprecedented number of scientific advances that have improved health outcomes and contributed significantly to the economic growth of this nation. **Unfortunately, since the doubling ended in 2003, funding for NIH has failed to keep pace with biomedical inflation and as a result, the NIH has lost more than 13% of its purchasing power.** The impact has been so significant that many researchers are struggling to secure funding for their research and some young investigators have decided to abandon scientific research or to do their work outside the United States. Many of the benefits of the doubling will be lost unless FY 2008 is the beginning of an annual commitment by the Congress to provide adequate funding for health research.

Last year the Congress overwhelmingly supported legislation authorizing 8.7% annual increases in NIH funding for Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008 (P.L. 109-687). **While we would like to see the NIH funded to the full authorized level in Fiscal Year 2008, a 6.7% increase in NIH funding over the next three years would at least restore the funding lost to NIH since 2003, and preserve our investment in biomedical research.** We are aware of the many demands confronting your Committee, and the pressing need for prudent investment of scarce resources. Yet, if we are to improve the health of Americans and improve the quality of their longer lives, Congress must support a long-term investment in the NIH.

Sincerely,

  
Rep. Edward J. Markey

  
Rep. David G. Reichert

  
Rep. Henry A. Waxman

  
Rep. Christopher Shays

  
Rep. Janice Schakowsky

  
Rep. Christopher Smith

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John F. Bunch  
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Rubin Hinojosa  
Alta R. Ghr  
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William O. Delahunt  
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Mike McDermott  
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Paul H. Cook

