

President Obama's Budget a Missed Opportunity for Improving Economy and Health

WASHINGTON – The following is a statement from United for Medical Research (UMR) in reaction to President Obama's FY13 budget:

“Although the National Institutes of Health (NIH) was spared the proposed budget reductions faced by many federal agencies, flat funding for NIH is a strategic mistake as our nation fights its way back to economic health. Research and development are crucial to creating new businesses and new jobs, and medical research is our best weapon against the looming explosion in health care costs related to Alzheimer's and other major health threats. Our nation simply cannot afford to tread water when it comes to innovation, particularly when we know that, going forward, the possibility exists of staggering budget cuts through sequestration.

“The U.S.'s competitive edge as the global leader in biomedical research is in jeopardy as other countries like the UK, Italy, Ireland and Portugal – even in the face of similar budget challenges – are choosing the wise course of doubling down on research investment. The President must address this national challenge head on, for the sake of our workers, our patients and our nation's economic vitality.

“Given the President's vocal support for investing in science and technology, we are disappointed that his budget does not align with our broad coalition's vision of steady increases in NIH funding. As the President himself said in his FY12 budget proposal last year, ‘Bio-medical research is essential to the health of the American people and the health of our economy.’

“With an inadequate NIH budget, we risk job loss related to research in academic centers, a decline in young investigators seeking careers in health research and the loss of the U.S.'s standing in the global research field could ensue.

“We look forward to working with members of Congress to ensure more innovative and transformative medical advancements are brought to life for patients, families and the American economy, and a potential sequestration is avoided.”

United for Medical Research is a coalition of leading research institutions, patient and health advocates and private industry, joined together to seek steady increases in federal funding for the National Institutes of Health. For more information, visit www.UnitedforMedicalResearch.com. The coalition groups consist of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, Association of American Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, BD, Biotechnology Industry Organization, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, Life Technologies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Melanoma Research Alliance, PhRMA, Research!America, Stanford University, The Endocrine Society, Thermo Fisher Scientific, University of Pennsylvania, University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University and Washington University in St. Louis.

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