April 8, 2019

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair, House Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related
Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member, House Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related
Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

The American Chemical Society (ACS) urges you to support robust funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) when the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill is written. The work of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), and the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) are particularly vital to advancing medical research and promoting the health of the American people, but remains unfamiliar to many Americans compared to disease-specific centers and institutes. Through its research grants and fellowship programs, NIH also plays an integral role in attracting and training the young scientists and engineers who will help the United States remain a leader in medical research and technology. Investing in the NIH now ensures a future of well-trained scientists and continued medical advances.
As an organization of over 150,000 chemical scientists and engineers, ACS understands the benefits of sustained, predictable funding for NIH to the research community. For example, NIGMS, which has supported more than 50 Nobel laureates, funds high-quality, non-disease-specific basic research, laying the scientific foundation for an array of advances in disease prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. NIBIB supports basic research and training through investigator-initiated grants, contracts, program project and center grants, and career development and training awards. The Institute also specializes in the development and application of cutting-edge technologies based upon engineering, mathematics, and the physical sciences for the solution of challenges intersecting biology and medicine. NCATS focuses on ensuring that groundbreaking research from universities reaches the people who need it by streamlining the pipeline from basic research to applied research to medicines and techniques used in medicine. NIGMS, NIBIB, and NCATS all contribute to the vibrant health and medical research community in the United States.

We realize that the return of Budget Control Act caps hampers the ability of appropriators to invest in critical federal priorities. We urge Congress to devise a new bipartisan budget agreement that raises nondefense discretionary spending caps to ensure continued scientific innovation and progress in medical research. We believe that any agreement on discretionary caps should provide comparable defense and nondefense increases. We also request a funding allocation for the Labor-HHS Subcommittee that allows for the sustained investment in NIH.

Sincerely,

Glenn S. Ruskin