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United States House of Representatives
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United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Conferees:

On behalf of the approximately 100 million Americans living with chronic diseases and/or disabilities, the National Health Council thanks the United States Congress for its commitment to the health of the American people. As an organization that promotes the health of all people, and supports and advocates on behalf of the voluntary health movement, we strongly encourage Congress to fund the NIH at the level agreed to by the United States Senate. We also support funding the CDC and prevention and wellness efforts at the level established by the U.S. House of Representatives.

Funding the NIH at the \$10 billion dollar level does more than just create new jobs; it creates jobs that, through the American spirit of innovation, cure diseases which currently have no treatment while simultaneously creating new American products that by themselves create jobs and support our economy.

The longer-term economic impact of biomedical research is significant and indisputable. A recent economic impact analysis conducted by FamiliesUSA found that NIH's FY2007 spending of \$22.846 billion generated more than \$50 billion in economic activity and created and supported more than 350,000 jobs generating wages of more than \$18 billion in the 50 states. NIH analysis demonstrates that research funded in the year 2000 resulted in 30,000 invention disclosures, 17,000 non-provisional patent applications, and more than 7,000 full patents. No less than 17 percent of all drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration between 1982 and 2006 were discovered in the course of NIH-funded research. Despite this great track record, as a result of flat funding for the last six years NIH

The Honorable Harry Reid
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United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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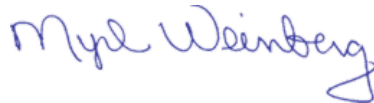
has lost 17.6% of its purchasing power, and is only able to fund one in ten meritorious research proposals, down from one in three in 2003.

Given the tremendous human and economic toll of not funding biomedical research, it is imperative that the commitment to funding the NIH be renewed and furthered. The potential for the creation of new, valuable American products with mass appeal for the world market is substantial and must be pursued. More importantly, increased funding for the NIH reflects the widely held societal value that future generations should not have to face the same afflictions we do. Stimulating the economy through NIH grants will help to ensure just that.

Supporting the CDC with \$462 million and prevention and wellness efforts with \$3 billion, as approved by the House of Representatives, further stimulates the economy through the creation of jobs. Moreover, this funding has the potential to dampen future health care costs, allowing consumers and businesses to stimulate other areas of the economy.

Again, we appreciate the efforts of this Congress to create a healthier and more prosperous American future through health funding. We are anxious to work with you and your colleagues to pass this critical legislation. Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Cain, our Assistant Vice President of Government Affairs and Programs, if you or your staff need to discuss these issues in greater detail. You may also reach me on my direct, private line at (202) 973-0546 or via e-mail at mweinberg@nhcouncil.org.

Sincerely,



Myrl Weinberg, CAE
President