



March 19, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

The undersigned organizations are members of the Friends of NIDDK, a coalition of professional societies and patient advocacy groups with a commitment to promoting and sustaining the vital research activities of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) within the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The Friends of NIDDK was established with the vision of uniting organizations to speak with one voice about the important research being conducted by NIDDK. On behalf of the Coalition, we would like to thank you for your past efforts to increase funding for NIH and NIDDK. **The Friends of NIDDK respectfully requests \$2.165 billion in FY 2019 for NIDDK.**

As you know, NIDDK has made numerous scientific advances through its ongoing research, and continued robust federal funding is needed to spur future scientific initiatives. NIDDK conducts and supports medical research and research training for diabetes and other endocrine and metabolic diseases; digestive diseases, nutritional disorders, and obesity; and kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases. Collectively these are some of the most common, yet costly, diseases impacting Americans.

For example, the over 114 million Americans that have diabetes and prediabetes cost the nation \$322 billion in 2012 alone. Although approximately 30 million American adults have chronic kidney disease and millions of others are at increased risk, NIH investments in kidney research are less than 1 percent of Medicare costs for kidney care. Recent Centers for Disease Control data indicates that the prevalence of Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, collectively known as inflammatory bowel disease, has nearly doubled over the past 15 years from 1.6 million to 3.3 million. These diseases cost more than \$2.2 billion in direct and indirect costs annually. Urologic diseases affect people of all ages, collectively result in health care expenditures of over \$40 billion, and often lead to substantial disability and impaired quality of life. These diseases represent only a portion of the NIDDK research portfolio, but underscore the need for continued investment.

Research activities funded by NIDDK are utilizing innovative technology to discover cross-cutting solutions that will ultimately reduce health care costs and improve quality of life for

millions of Americans. Some of the NIDDK's most recent research has examined genetic variants, biomarkers, inter-organ nerve communication, artificial organ production, and many other exciting and ground-breaking issues that deserve continued support. With increased resources, NIDDK could implement a wide array of important research initiatives, which could prove invaluable in our understanding of these debilitating diseases.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you to support NIDDK. Should you have any questions or require additional information regarding the Friends of NIDDK, please contact the Friends of NIDDK's Washington representative, Jim Twaddell, at [Jim.Twaddell@dbr.com](mailto:Jim.Twaddell@dbr.com) or (202) 230-5130.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP)  
American Diabetes Association  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Kidney Fund  
American Liver Foundation  
American Nephrology Nurses Association  
American Pancreatic Association  
American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE)  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Transplantation  
American Urological Association  
American Urogynecologic Society (AUGS)  
Association of Minority Health and Health Professions Schools, Inc.  
Beyond Celiac  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation  
Digestive Diseases Coalition  
Global Liver Institute  
International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD)  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
JDRF (formerly the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation)  
National Kidney Foundation  
NephCure Kidney International  
North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition  
Northwest Kidney Centers  
Nutrition and Medical Foods Coalition  
PKD Foundation  
Renal Physicians Association  
Simon Foundation