



Chairman Tom Cole

*Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

FY 2016 Budget Hearing - National Institutes of Health

March 3, 2015

Opening Statement As Prepared

Good morning. It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education to discuss the fiscal year 2016 National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget request. We are looking forward to hearing the testimony of Dr. Collins.

I would like to publicly thank Dr. Collins and the staff at NIH for hosting me and our other subcommittee members for a briefing and tour at the NIH campus a few weeks ago. I think it's safe to say we all left NIH with a deeper appreciation of the exciting work your staff do every day to find ways to save lives.

The scope of biomedical research supported through and at the NIH is wide and we are confident we will one day find cures for diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's. Ensuring a sufficient basic biomedical research base and supporting the next generation of researchers is critical to pave the way for these long-term advancements.

Your budget assumes many areas of enhanced spending on genomic activity, continued focus on Ebola, universal flu vaccine, antibiotic resistance, and Alzheimer's research-- to list only a few. Of course we all support biomedical research. Unfortunately, right now sequester is the law of the land and, given the reality of the funding allocations, we won't be able to do everything the Administration is proposing. I look forward to having a discussion with you this morning on your top priorities for this year, given our funding constraints.

I would also be remiss if I did not point out how important it is to ensure we continue to focus on the next generation of investigators. We know how long it takes for a new drug or treatment to make it from the lab to the patient, so without a pipeline of young researchers committed to following the process, we won't be able to find the cures we seek.

Today we welcome Dr. Francis Collins, the NIH Director, to the Subcommittee. Dr. Collins is accompanied by five of his Institute Directors who can assist in answering specific Member questions. They are:

- Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, M.D., Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases;

- Dr. Thomas R. Insel, M.D., Director of the National Institute of Mental Health;
- Dr. Jon R. Lorsch, Ph.D., Director, National Institute of General Medical Sciences;
- Dr. Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse; and
- Dr. Gary H. Gibbons, M.D., Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

As a reminder to the Subcommittee and our witness, we will abide by the 5 minute rule, and before we begin, I would like to yield the floor to my Chairman, the Gentleman from Kentucky, and then to our Ranking Member, the Gentelady from New York, and finally our Subcommittee Ranking Member, the Gentelady from Connecticut, for opening statements.

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