



Chairman Tom Cole

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

FY 2018 Hearing of the National Institutes of Health – Advances in Biomedical Research

May 16, 2017

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 National Institutes of Health (NIH) and recent advances in biomedical research. 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 our annual briefing and tour at the NIH campus in February. As usual, all of the members learned a lot about the important work you do every day to improve the health of Americans and people around the world.

Investment in NIH has been the key driver in making the United States the world leader in biomedical research and has led to vast improvements in life expectancy and quality of life. NIH is the primary source of funding for basic medical research not only on NIH's campus but also at 2,500 universities and research institutions in every state.

I am very proud that Congress increased NIH's funding by \$2 billion in the fiscal year 2017 omnibus spending bill. Congress also passed the 21st Century Cures Act last December, which will build upon and greatly enhance efforts to find cures for diseases such as cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

I was therefore especially disappointed to see the proposed budget cut to the National Institutes of Health this year. I am concerned that the reductions in the request would stall the progress that our recent investments were intended to achieve and potentially discourage promising scientists from entering or remaining in biomedical research.

I look forward to hearing about recent progress in biomedical research as well as about how NIH will focus resources on its top priorities in the upcoming fiscal year. I intend to work with you going forward to maintain momentum towards developing new treatments and cures for disease while achieving efficiencies and being a responsible steward of taxpayer dollars.

I 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. Doug Lowy, M.D., Acting Director, National Cancer Institute; and
- Dr. Gary Gibbons, M.D., Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute;
- Dr. Joshua Gordon, Director, National Institute of Mental Health; and
- Dr. Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse.

As a reminder to the Subcommittee and our witnesses, we will abide by the 5 minute rule, and before we begin, I would like to yield the floor to our Ranking Member, the Gentlelady from Connecticut, for an opening statement.

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