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Academy Advocacy Report

July 6, 2020

Updates on all NIH Institutes and Centers will be forthcoming and shared.

June 24: Representatives Diana DeGette (D-Colo.), Fred Upton (R-Mich.), Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas), Frank Lucas (R-Okla.), Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.), and Anthony Gonzalez (R-Ohio) introduced the bipartisan Research Investment to Spark the Economy Act (RISE Act).

The legislation authorizes approximately **\$26 billion in supplemental funding for federal research agencies, including NIH**, to ameliorate the tremendous disruption to federally funded research. The bill also provides for temporary regulatory relief due to the pandemic. The bill's provisions are consistent with the [letter that over 180 Members of the House](#) sent to House leaders in April, which the Ad Hoc Group endorsed (it is also consistent with the [recommendations issued by AAU-APLU-AAMC-ACE](#)).

[Congresswoman Degette's RISE Act Release.](#)

Research organizations, scientific societies, research and higher education associations, coalitions, universities, businesses, business organizations and trade groups are invited to endorse the legislation. Please complete [this form](#) to endorse the bill. The current list of endorsing organizations can be found [here](#).

May 15: The House passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (The Heroes Act) (H.R. 6800)", a \$3 trillion package to respond to the Coronavirus crisis. The vote was 208 to 199, mostly but not entirely along party lines. While the White House is considering policy options for the next relief package, the Senate is not expected to take action before August recess.

In the Act, NIH is provided \$4.745 billion to expand COVID-19-related research on the NIH campus and at academic institutions across the country, and to support the shutdown and startup costs of biomedical research laboratories nationwide.

Supplemental Appropriations (\$4.7 billion)

- *NIAID: \$500 million through September 2024 to “prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus.”*
- *NIMH: \$200 million through September 2024 to “prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus.”*
- *Office of the Director: \$4.021 billion through September 2024 to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus, domestically or internationally, provided that not less than \$3 billion of the amount provided under this heading in this Act shall be for offsetting the costs related to reductions in lab productivity resulting from the Coronavirus pandemic or public health measures related to the Coronavirus pandemic.*
- Additional details on HEROES Act can be found on our website: <http://www.acadrad.org/legislative-updates/>

May 4: NIBIB has received \$560 million to fund Covid-19 related research, and all updated opportunities are being regularly disseminated to all Academy membership. On May 4th, NIBIB Director, Dr. Bruce Tromberg and Program Staff spent two hours on a WebEx with thirty-seven Academy Early Career Investigators (CECI) to answer questions about NIBIB initiatives, grant applications and in preparation of their pursuit of new funding opportunities, a summary of this call is [available here](#). The Academy is creating additional opportunities to ensure our imaging investigators are well prepared for these funding opportunities.

Academy advocacy efforts on the stimulus package are focused on the Senate to push for the following efforts, and to increase funding provided to NIH to address the needs of our membership and the research community-at-large as follows:

1.) A collective advocacy community effort to secure **\$31 billion in additional emergency supplemental investments in the NIH**. This is SEPARATE from the current Covid-19 funds and SEPARATE from the annual appropriation.

- Opportunities to fund additional Covid-19 research related activities
- Near-term response to support ramping up of NIH-supported research activities and preserve the momentum of the nation’s investment in biomedical research
- Long-term investments to rebuild the biomedical research enterprise, and
- Enabling continuation of robust and necessary investments through regular appropriations.

2.) A Congressional and Senate effort to secure \$26 billion in bridge-funding for researchers to cover supplements for research grants and contracts, provide emergency relief to sustain research support personnel and base operating costs for core research facilities and fund additional graduate student and postdoc fellowships, traineeships and research assistantships.

- To cover research grant and contract supplements (“cost extensions”) due to Covid-19 impacts,
- For emergency relief to sustain research support personnel and base operating costs for core research facilities and user-funded research services, and
- To fund additional graduate student and postdoc fellowships, traineeships, and research assistantships for up to two years, based on assumption of 4 months of closure, among other issues across the US research enterprise.

April 24: Congress passed “Paycheck Protection Program Health Care Enhancement Act ([H.R. 266](#), Phase 3.5). The bill provides \$484 billion in emergency aid to small businesses and hospitals, including:

- **\$25 billion to research, develop, validate, manufacture, purchase, administer, and expand capacity for COVID-19 testing, and includes \$1.8 billion for NIH:**
 - **\$500 million for the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB)**
 - \$306 million for the National Cancer Institute (NCI), and
 - \$1 billion to the Office of the Director, including support for public/private partnerships.

March 27: Congress passed the Coronavirus, Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (the 3rd Package) in which it provided the National Institutes of Health with special emergency funding to specifically address prevent, prepare for and respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. The funding was specified as follows and remains available until September 30, 2024, in an unusual multiyear provision:

- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) – \$706,000,000
 - *156,000,000 of this total is designated for facility needs for vaccine research
- National Heart Lung Blood Institute (NHLBI) – \$103,400,000
- **National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering (NIBIB) –\$60,000,000**
- National Center for Translational Sciences (NCATS) - \$36,000,000
- National Library of Medicine (NLM) – \$10,000,000
- Office of the Director/Common Fund – \$30,000,000

Annual Congressional Appropriations

- The House and Senate are moving forward on appropriations bills, including Labor/HHS (which funds NIH), with the hope of the House voting each bill out by late July and the Senate before August recess, to reach the goal of being signed into law by September 30, 2020.
- It is more likely that the bills will not be voted out by August, and Congress will need to reach agreement on a continuing resolution to keep the government funded beyond the end of the Fiscal Year until after the election, possibly into next year. Known challenges to the schedule include:
 - Lost time on calendar due to lockdown. Congress has returned for votes and the House passed a rule for proxy voting, though it is being challenged by the House Republicans in a lawsuit
 - Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 (BBA) provides little room for increases for discretionary funding for FY2021. These caps will need to be raised for any increases for the Labor HHS bill, for example
 - House and Senate Appropriations leaders are interested in raising the caps and are discussing having VA emergency funding to free up \$11 billion for discretionary programs.
 - Appropriators would like to negotiate “exempting” programs that relate to the Covid-19 response from the budget, to allow flexibility in funding for the response without cutting discretionary funding to other critical programs such as NIH and other federal agencies that are receiving Covid-19 support
- We are engaged with our coalition partners to pursue critical relief to cover costs and shore up programs for biomedical research programs in the stimulus packages.
- We have been and continue to be actively advocating Senate and House offices both in person and virtually for the need to increase funding to NIH (\$3bil) and to NIBIB (\$25mil) in FY21 (there is current and ongoing activity in requesting their support of these increases, and raising awareness of the impact on imaging research in their states or districts.)

- The Academy submitted Academy-written testimony to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee outlining our advocacy priorities and needs while providing our FY21 funding asks for NIH and NIBIB.
- The Academy approached over 70 House and Senate offices for submission of our committee report language on the NIBIB data repository efforts for the FY21 LHHS appropriations bill.

