



January 17, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
419 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the Endocrine Society, I am writing to urge you to provide full reauthorization of the Special Diabetes Program (SDP) through fiscal year 2019. Although the Congress provided some funding for both components of SDP in the continuing resolution passed in December, **it is critical to understand that with only partial funding, not only are prevention programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives severely limited, but key research towards a cure for type 1 diabetes is put on hold.**

Because FY 2018 funds must be spent by September 30, 2018, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) must release its Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) by early February so that researchers can submit their grant proposals in advance of the latest possible grant application receipt date (May 18). 10 FOAs are written and ready to be issued, but are on hold until further funding is appropriated. We are soon reaching the point where it will be too late for NIH to issue FOAs for FY 2018 at all. **To support new research in FY 2018, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases would need an extension of the SDP no later than the end of January.**

In addition, important ongoing research projects will be negatively affected if SDP does not receive full funding. Without any further extension of the SDP beyond the partial appropriation, many productive diabetes research programs and clinical trial networks currently supported will have to be scaled back or ended.

As you know, SDP programs have a proven track record of success and wide bipartisan support. SDP provides dedicated funding for type 1 diabetes research at the NIH, which has accelerated our understanding of how to improve outcomes for people with type 1 diabetes and yielded better treatments and tangible progress towards a cure. SDPI supports treatment and prevention in American Indian and Alaska Native communities impacted by type 2 diabetes at a rate of 15.1 percent, prevalence higher than any other minority population in the United States. SDPI has resulted in a 54 percent reduction in kidney failure rates among Native American populations between 1996 and 2013. In 2016, 356 House Members and 75 Senators signed letters endorsing the reauthorization of SDP.

We appreciate your past support for these programs and **urge you to take immediate steps to provide a multi-year renewal of SDP with \$150 million per program per year without making cuts to other important public health and prevention programs.** With your leadership, we will have the opportunity to pursue new and emerging research areas and continue ongoing successful efforts to benefit the 114



million Americans living with or at risk for diabetes. If you have any questions or would like more information, please have your staff contact our Chief Policy Officer Mila Becker at [mbecker@endocrine.org](mailto:mbecker@endocrine.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Byrd Keenan".

Barbara Byrd Keenan FASAE, CAE  
Chief Executive Officer  
Endocrine Society