

DATE

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

On behalf of the XX undersigned organizations, we urge you to support the quick passage of the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act to reinvigorate the federal research enterprise, including that funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which has been limited by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bipartisan, bicameral RISE Act would provide \$25 billion in emergency relief--\$10 billion of which would support NIH-funded research--to continue federally funded research that has been stalled, delayed, or even stopped as a result of the pandemic. The long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country's biomedical research enterprise are becoming clear: funds are being diverted to support COVID-related research to the detriment of research on conditions within the missions of NIH's 27 institutes and centers; the new COVID-related expenses incurred to run research are reducing the buying power of existing grants; and we are in danger of losing a generation of investigators who are particularly vulnerable to career disruptions.

Congress must take action now to ensure the COVID-19 pandemic does not undermine the future of the research enterprise. The United States was able to respond quickly to the pandemic, including supporting the development of effective vaccines, because of the sustained investment in NIH. Congress must continue its bipartisan commitment to ensure the country is prepared to future pandemics and continuing health threats, like diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, cardiovascular disease, substance abuse disorders, and maternal mortality. Without additional emergency funds, ongoing research in these and other priority areas will be set back creating additional public health crises.

Besides jeopardizing research progress, further delay in appropriating emergency funding will damage the future biomedical research workforce. NIH has taken important steps to improve the diversity of the research workforce; however, the pandemic has taken a disproportionate toll on early-stage researchers and those with caregiving responsibilities as shown by two recent surveys NIH conducted on COVID-19's impact on the extramural research workforce.¹ Without adequate support, these individuals will leave the workforce at a time their contributions are most needed. It will be critical to address the negative impacts on research productivity and researchers' ability to apply for grants before the bottom completely falls out of the job market for this next generation of scientific research leaders. We are concerned that the

¹ <https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2021/03/25/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-the-extramural-scientific-workforce-outcomes-from-an-nih-led-survey/>

losses that we have seen to date are just the beginning, and the negative impact will certainly continue to grow. We urge you to act now to prevent this outcome.

As Congress continues to address the pandemic and support the country's recovery, we respectfully request you support research now by passing the RISE Act.