

April 28, 2015

The Honorable Jim Cooper
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cynthia Lummis
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Cooper and Lummis:

The undersigned organizations are pleased to offer our endorsement for the *Research for All Act of 2015*. We believe this legislation will improve our knowledge of women's inclusion in medical research, by updating reports on women and minority inclusion in medical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It will also expand our understanding of sex differences in both basic and clinical research at the NIH, and direct the FDA to guarantee that clinical drug trials for expedited drug products are sufficient to determine safety and effectiveness for both men and women.

The recent focus on this issue by our federal agencies, as well as the media have highlighted the importance of biological sex differences to health, especially the need to use female cells, tissues, animals, and patients in medical research. Our organizations support the legislation's effort in asking the NIH Director to determine the appropriateness of including both male and female cells, tissues, and animals in basic research, and update NIH's guidelines to improve inclusion of women in all phases of medical research within one year of the legislation's enactment. In May of 2014, the NIH signaled that they would be changing the Agency's policy regarding inclusion of female cells and animals in research. Our organizations believe that this move is a step in the right direction; however, no guidelines regarding this issue have been put out by the Agency to date.

We are encouraged by the legislation's proposal of additional outreach and educational initiatives on the influence of sex as a variable in basic research. We believe the legislation's directive that the NIH Director consult with the scientific and medical communities to develop the base of knowledge around this issue to determine what areas should be included and exempted from the mandate is critical to advancing the intent of the legislation and will dramatically improve the way research is conducted in the U.S.

Our organizations further support the legislation's codification of the NIH's Special Centers of Research on Sex Differences (SCORs). These programs are designed to increase innovative, interdisciplinary research focusing on sex differences and major medical problems, which affect women through centers that facilitate basic, clinical, and translational research. These programs are critical to translating science from bench to bedside.

Thank you for your leadership and support in medical and health services research and its commitment to the health of the nation. We look forward to continuing to work with you to build a healthier future for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR)

American Academy of Nursing

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Heart Association/American Stroke Association

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses

Center for Women Policy Studies

Endocrine Society

HADASSAH, The Women's Zionist Organization of America

Jacobs Institute of Women's Health

National Organization for Women

Ovarian Cancer National Alliance

OWL-The Voice of Women 40+

Reproductive Health Technologies Project

SCAI - Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine

The TMJ Association, Ltd.

The Mended Hearts, Inc.

Women's Heart Alliance

WomenHeart: The National coalition for Women with Heart Disease