

AAPM Urges Congress to Oppose Cuts in NIH Funding

The American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM)¹ requests that Congress reverse President Trump's proposed 18.3 percent cut of approximately \$5.8 billion from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget for fiscal year (FY) 2018—an extraordinarily steep cut that would reduce NIH's budget below the 2003 level and threaten the United States' preeminence in the medical research arena, resulting in the loss of life-saving discoveries that otherwise would benefit Americans.

The NIH is the backbone of a scientific research enterprise that makes the United States a world leader in medical research. The agency keeps its administrative expenditures lean, opting to leverage its research investment by allocating more than 80 percent of its resources to biomedical research projects, training programs and science centers, across the entire country. Building a world-class scientific enterprise is a long-term endeavor that must be supported by robust, predictable, and stable funding from year to year. We believe the proposed cut would disrupt ongoing research of enormous benefit to public health and patients, and limit or end the careers of an entire generation of scientists, particularly young scientists just starting their careers. Moreover, the proposed budget cut would likely undermine the fiscal stability of academic centers, which depend on NIH.

The AAPM, its members, and other stakeholders in the scientific and research community cannot be complacent about the President's budget proposal because of its potential consequences. The AAPM urges Congress to oppose this proposed budget cut and calls upon Congress to ensure that medical research remains a national priority by maintaining the

¹ The American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) is the premier organization in medical physics, a broadly-based scientific and professional discipline encompassing physics principles and applications in biology and medicine whose mission is to advance the science, education and professional practice of medical physics. Medical physicists contribute to the effectiveness of radiological imaging procedures by assuring radiation safety and helping to develop improved imaging techniques (e.g., mammography, CT, MR, ultrasound). They contribute to development of therapeutic techniques (e.g., prostate implants, stereotactic radiosurgery), collaborate with radiation oncologists to design treatment plans, and monitor equipment and procedures to insure that cancer patients receive the prescribed dose of radiation to the correct location. Medical physicists are responsible for ensuring that imaging and treatment facilities meet the rules and regulations of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and various state regulatory agencies. AAPM represents over 8,500 medical physicists.

momentum initiated in FY 2016 when Congress provided the NIH with a \$2 billion funding increase, putting the health and welfare of the American people first.

Handwritten signature of Melissa C. Martin in black ink.

Melissa Carol Martin, MS, FAAPM, FACMP
President, AAPM

Handwritten signature of Bruce H. Curran in black ink.

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