



February 10, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

As you work to enact final spending legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2017, the undersigned 173 organizations and institutions representing patients and caregivers, health providers and clinicians, faculty and students, scientists, policy professionals, employers, and insurers **urge you to protect AHRQ's budget from further cuts and provide the agency at least \$334 million in budget authority, consistent with current levels.** We understand lawmakers face difficult choices in funding myriad priorities with increasingly limited resources, but deep cuts to AHRQ in the current environment are pennywise and pound foolish.

With the federal government being the largest purchaser of health care—more than \$1 trillion per year and rising—it has a responsibility to fund research that determines how to make care as effective, efficient, affordable, equitable, and safe as possible. AHRQ is the only federal agency with the sole purpose of generating and disseminating such evidence. The health services research, quality improvement protocols, datasets, and tools supported by AHRQ are used in hospitals, medical centers, physician and other clinician practices, nursing facilities, clinics, and public health departments in communities across the nation to improve the quality, access, and value of the health care system.

The Friends of AHRQ thank you for recognizing AHRQ's unique and critical role in the research continuum that helps patients get the most from new discoveries in basic and clinical research by improving health care delivery. Unfortunately, the proposed cuts in the respective Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bills for FY 2017, to varying degrees, would significantly undermine that role. These cuts would follow upon the 8 percent cut AHRQ sustained in FY 2016 that resulted in the termination of long-standing programs—including the HIV Research Network and the National Quality Measures Clearinghouse, among others—as well as cutbacks in the production of the congressionally-mandated National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Reports that serve as the gold standard in monitoring and improving patient outcomes; each of these

programs and services is uniquely valuable. We worry that further cuts to AHRQ's budget authority would make it harder for health care delivery organizations, health providers, policymakers, and the people they serve to make informed choices about how to obtain the best care while addressing costs and protecting patient safety.

The Friends of AHRQ appreciate that competing priorities abound and resources are scarce, and we recognize the importance of investing federal funds wisely. We urge you to protect AHRQ from additional cuts—providing the agency at least \$334 million in FY 2017—because it isn't enough to **develop** cures. Understanding how to most effectively and efficiently **deliver** cures to patients through health services research is a critical component on the health research continuum, and one that has implications for health care quality, cost, access and ultimately patient outcomes.

We thank you for your consideration of our request and look forward to helping you preserve the agency's unique role in generating evidence on the quality of health care and ensuring the evidence is used in practice. For more information, including a copy of our report on AHRQ's contributions over the years, please contact Lindsey Horan at 202.292.6718 or [lindsey.horan@academyhealth.org](mailto:lindsey.horan@academyhealth.org).

Sincerely,

Academic Pediatric Association  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Academy of Radiology Research  
AcademyHealth  
Adult Congenital Heart Association  
Alliance for Aging Research  
American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology  
American Academy of Dermatology Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine  
American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery  
American Academy of Pediatrics  
American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC)  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Directors of Nursing Services (AADNS)  
American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN)  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Board of Medical Specialties  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Clinical Pharmacy  
American College of Nurse-Midwives  
American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine

American College of Physicians  
American College of Preventive Medicine  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
American Health Quality Association  
American Heart Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA)  
American Medical Student Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Osteopathic Association  
American Pediatric Society  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology  
American Society of Perianesthesia Nurses (ASPAN)  
American Society of Plastic Surgeons  
American Statistical Association  
American Thoracic Society  
Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Association of Reproductive Health Professionals  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of University Radiologists  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Boston University School of Public Health  
BJC HealthCare  
Brown University Center for Long-Term Care Quality & Innovation  
California Consortium of Addiction Programs and Professionals  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine  
Cedars-Sinai Health System

Center for Healthcare Organizational and Innovation Research, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science  
Coalition for Health Funding  
Coalition for Imaging and Bioengineering Research  
Cognitive Science Society  
Columbia University Medical Center  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)  
Conference of Boston Teaching Hospitals  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America  
Department of Health Policy and Management, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health  
Division of Health Policy and Management, University of Minnesota  
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation  
ECRI Institute  
Emory University  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
Global Healthy Living Foundation  
Group Health Cooperative  
Harvard University  
Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)  
Healthy Teen Network  
Heart Rhythm Society  
Hepatitis Foundation International  
HIV Medicine Association  
Illinois Association of Behavioral Health  
Integrated Health Interview Series  
International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium  
International Society of Psychiatric Nurses (ISPN)  
Interstitial Cystitis Association  
Kaiser Permanente  
Lakeshore Foundation  
March of Dimes  
Mayo Clinic  
Medica Research Institute  
Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities  
Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine  
NAPHSIS: National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems  
National Alopecia Areata Foundation  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)  
National Business Group on Health  
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care  
National Coalition on Health Care  
National Committee for Quality Assurance

National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Patient Safety Foundation  
NephCure Kidney International  
North American Primary Care Research Group  
North Carolina Society for Public Health Education (NC SOPHE)  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Oregon Health & Science University  
Palo Alto Medical Foundation Research Institute  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Penn Medicine  
Penn State University  
Physician Assistant Education Association  
Population Association of America  
Public Health Institute  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
Research!America  
Scleroderma Foundation  
Sleep Research Society  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Society for Medical Decision Making (SMDM)  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Public Health Education  
Society for Research in Psychopathology  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Spina Bifida Association  
The Clinical Research Forum  
The Executive Committee of the Guidelines International Network North America Regional Community  
The Johns Hopkins University  
The Joint Commission  
The Leapfrog Group  
The Marfan Foundation  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
Trust for America's Health  
U.S. Hereditary Angioedema Association  
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus  
University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System  
University of Michigan Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation  
University of Missouri System  
University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Rochester  
University of Washington  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

UPMC Community Provider Services  
Vanderbilt University Medical Center  
Wateree AIDS Task Force  
Weill Cornell Medicine  
West Virginia University School of Medicine  
Yale University