

The AMERICAN ASSOCIATION of  
IMMUNOLOGISTS



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Arlene H. Sharpe, M.D., Ph.D.

November 29, 2016

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Wayne M. Yokoyama, M.D.

The Honorable Fred Upton  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
2125 Rayburn House Office Building  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette  
Ranking Member  
Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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by email

Dear Chairman Upton and Ranking Member DeGette:

*Executive Director*

M. Michele Hogan, Ph.D.

The American Association of Immunologists (AAI), the nation's largest professional association of research scientists and physicians who are dedicated to understanding the immune system through basic research, resulting in improved means to prevent, treat, and cure disease, greatly appreciates your diligent work over the last three years crafting legislation designed to strengthen the nation's biomedical research enterprise.

AAI understands that a revised version of the 21st Century Cures Act, legislation which you co-authored, will be considered by the House of Representatives later this week. This legislation will provide NIH with an additional \$4.8 billion over 10 years through a new NIH Innovation Account. It is our understanding that the Cures Act intends a critically important outcome: that its new funds will supplement, but not supplant, regular NIH appropriations. As a result, the legislation will support several important NIH initiatives, including the National Cancer Moonshot, the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies Initiative, and the Precision Medicine Initiative, while freeing appropriators to increase NIH funding for basic, investigator-initiated research, the foundation for future discoveries.

We also appreciate that the bill takes important steps to support the next generation of biomedical researchers, removes barriers to government scientists participating in relevant scientific meetings and conferences, and creates a Research Policy Board to critically evaluate how regulations can be modified and harmonized to reduce administrative burden.

AAI strongly supports the above-described provisions of the revised Cures Act and believes that they will advance biomedical research and help re-invigorate the research enterprise in the United States.

We thank you for your dedication and hard work to ensure that the legislation not only provides increased funding for NIH, but also ensures that important basic research continues to generate the understanding and ideas needed to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century treatments and cures.

Sincerely,

Beth A. Garvy, Ph.D.  
Chair, AAI Committee on Public Affairs