



**Statement of The American Association of Immunologists (AAI)
Issued by AAI Committee on Public Affairs Chair Cherié Butts, Ph.D.
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[The American Association of Immunologists \(AAI\)](#), the nation’s largest professional association of research scientists and physicians dedicated to understanding the immune system, is deeply concerned about the flat base budget (\$48 billion) proposed for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) appropriations bill. Flat funding for NIH, paired with the NIH budget cut enacted for FY 2024, would (1) impede scientific progress in the United States (U.S.) at a time of rich scientific opportunity; (2) fail to meet the needs of the current U.S.-based biomedical research enterprise; (3) damage our global competitiveness; and (4) fail to capitalize on the economic gains provided by investments in research.

AAI is also concerned about the proposed restructuring of NIH, which would reduce the number of NIH Institutes and Centers from 27 to 15. While AAI agrees that the structure of NIH should be evaluated for potential streamlining, such an evaluation should be conducted by a nonpartisan, expert scientific body, such as the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

AAI is disturbed by the \$1 billion proposed cut to the budget of the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H). ARPA-H, still in its infancy (funded its first award in August 2023), needs sustained support to fulfill its mission to “accelerate better health outcomes for everyone by supporting the development of high-impact solutions to society’s most challenging health problems.” In addition, AAI is concerned with the prospect of making ARPA-H part of a new NIH institute with several other NIH entities. Congress purposefully established ARPA-H as an independent entity, intended to have its own culture, budget, and reporting structure. That crucial independence could be endangered under this reorganization.

AAI recognizes that this legislation was drafted under the confines of a difficult funding allocation, approximately 11% below last year’s funding level. However, increasing funding for the critical biomedical agencies in the bill will require a stronger and more practical funding allocation. AAI urges the House and the Senate to work toward a bipartisan, compromise funding plan that establishes a foundation for robust investment



in biomedical research.

AAI recommends FY 2025 funding levels of at least \$51.3 billion for the NIH base budget and \$1.7 billion for ARPA-H. This growth would enable both NIH and ARPA-H to invest in strong and diverse portfolios of U.S.-based biomedical research, including cutting-edge immunological research, needed funding to support the next generation of researchers, and help the U.S. maintain its competitive edge as the global leader in innovation.

