



**Association of  
American Medical Colleges**

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**Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.**  
President and Chief Executive Officer

September 4, 2015

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Baldwin and Collins:

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) is pleased to endorse your “Next Generation Research Act” to enhance the pipeline of young scientists pursuing careers in medical research. The AAMC is a not-for-profit association representing all 144 accredited U.S. medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems; and nearly 93 academic and professional societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC represents 148,000 faculty members; 83,000 medical students; 115,000 resident physicians; and thousands of graduate students and postdoctoral scientists. More than half of the extramural research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is conducted at AAMC-member medical schools and teaching hospitals.

Enhancing our nation’s investment in science is essential if the United States is to remain competitive in the innovation-based global economy. As your legislation recognizes, a critical element of that investment is ensuring that the brightest young minds of the next generation are able to contribute to the advancement of science.

The AAMC shares your concern about the impact of the current funding environment on the next generation of researchers. The NIH budget has lost more than a quarter of its purchasing power since FY 2003 after inflation. Reduced funding means NIH can only pursue 1 in every 6 research proposals. NIH Director Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., recently testified before the Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee that, as a result, “[W]e’re leaving a lot of great science, maybe half of it on the table which we would not have done in past years.” This not only limits the ability of established scientists to pursue new research, but it also discourages the next generation of scientists from pursuing careers in research.

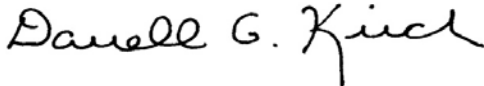
This continuing erosion of the NIH’s budget also is moving the nation’s commitment to medical research backwards at a time when countries around the globe are doubling down on science. Talented medical researchers from all over the world, who once flocked to the United States for training and stayed to contribute to our innovation-driven economy, are now returning to better opportunities in their home countries. The impact of

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losing a generation of investigators and medical innovators will have repercussions far into the future.

The AAMC believes your legislation is an essential step in helping ensure this nation will have a well-trained, diverse medical research workforce, and the association is pleased to endorse it. The AAMC and its members commend you for your leadership in introducing this legislation and for again making the biomedical research workforce one of your priorities in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. We look forward to working with you to support the nation's medical research efforts.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell G. Kirch". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.