



The President's Budget Cuts Health Research – Harm Felt at Home and Abroad

NIH is our nation's leading agency for conducting and supporting medical research. Medical advances based on NIH's work have improved the health and quality of life for Americans and people around the world. Yet our investment in the NIH has been falling short and, with the President's proposed budget, would fall even further behind.

The President's Proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 Budget for NIH Is Inadequate

- In recent years, NIH funding has not kept pace with inflation. The President's budget proposal of \$28.858 billion would leave NIH's inflation-adjusted funding at 13 percent below 2004 levels.
- His proposed funding is \$73 million below 2007 levels. When the proposed funding is adjusted to exclude funds for a non-NIH program, the budget cut rises to \$273 million. A 3.7 percent funding increase would be needed just to keep up with biomedical inflation.

Funding decreases hurt NIH's ability to continue current research, to fund promising new research, and to expand research that translates medical discoveries into practice

- This year, up to 95 clinical trials that are testing anticancer drugs may have to be delayed or closed altogether because of funding cuts.
- The President's budget phases out 573 ongoing, promising research grants.

Inadequate Funding Hurts Global Health Advances That Matter at Home and Abroad

NIH conducts research on diseases that are the leading causes of illness and death around the world – HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), malaria, and neglected tropical diseases. There are obvious humanitarian reasons to support funding for advances in global health. But beyond that, medical advances in global health offer direct benefits to Americans.

Funding research in global health helps protect Americans' health

- Diseases from elsewhere pose a health threat to us – they're just a plane or boat ride away. SARS, HIV/AIDS, and the West Nile Virus all originated elsewhere. Multi-drug resistant TB has already surfaced in Washington, D.C. and New York. Failing to fund research because a health threat is currently "somewhere else" puts Americans at risk.

Improving health in the developing world has economic benefits for us

- Improving health can improve economies. In Mexico, improvements in health from 1970 to 1995 accounted for about one-third of the country's economic growth.
- Improving the economies of developing nations benefits us as well. Countries with growing economies become trade partners and new markets – rich economies' trade with developing countries is growing twice as fast as their trade with each other.

Improving health in developing countries promotes political stability and advances American foreign policy

- The Department of Defense, the National Intelligence Council, and the CIA have all recognized the connection between global health problems and national security. Heavy disease burdens can disrupt social structures, exacerbate conflicts, and destabilize states.
- Health improvements can increase stability and improve America's image and foreign relations. China is building ties in African countries by funding health infrastructure improvements. America can improve its image by contributing to health gains. A key part of this effort can be leading the development of medical advances that target diseases that are endemic in low-income countries.

The current funding for global health research is inadequate and would likely suffer further with reductions in NIH funding

- AIDS, TB, and malaria are responsible for 6 million deaths annually – substantially more than the combined populations of Manhattan, Chicago, San Francisco, and Boston. Yet less than 3 percent of NIH's total budget is spent on vaccines for those diseases.
- Last year, cuts to the NIH budget resulted in funding being completely cut to 11 AIDS clinical trials in the U.S.

In Global Health, Government Support Is Essential to Move Discoveries into Practice

Private industry moves many NIH discoveries through development. However, this works mainly when there is a lucrative paying market. For global health, the model that relies on the for-profit drug industry fails. In global health, government funding is essential for both basic research and the translational research that moves discoveries into practice.

The private market does not step in to research or develop products that target key global health issues

- Profit potential is one of the foremost factors that companies consider when evaluating whether to move promising research through development. When a product's market is primarily in low-income countries, the profit potential is limited, and so is private industry's interest.
- Drug development patterns bear out this private market failure. Between 1975 and 2004, 1,556 new drugs came to the market. Of these, 170 were for cardiovascular diseases; only 21 new drugs were developed for tropical diseases and TB – diseases that affect the same number of people.

Shortchanging NIH Hurts Us All and Places America's – and the World's – Health at Risk

We urge Congress to provide NIH with a 6.7 percent increase over 2007 funding levels. That would adjust for inflation from 2007 to 2008 and add 3 percent to begin making up for losses in purchasing power over recent years.

We urge Congress to recognize the importance of expanding funding for global health research and the development of ways to treat and prevent the leading causes of illness and death around the world, such as HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases. Congress can do this by supporting appropriations report language that acknowledges the need for increased global health research and development.

A strong NIH benefits Americans and people worldwide.
