

April 16, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 2051

Dear Chair Capito, Ranking Member Baldwin, Chair Aderholt, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong support for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative. **We respectfully request that you restore funding to \$680 million for the BRAIN Initiative for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.** This program is supported by the 21st Century Cures Innovation Fund, and with diminishing resources available from the fund, it is critical that Congress provide robust discretionary appropriations to allow this groundbreaking program to continue to make revolutionary advances that improve brain and overall health outcomes.

Despite tremendous progress, brain disorders, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, autism, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, schizophrenia, depression, headaches, and traumatic brain injury, are projected to be some of the most disabling and costly chronic diseases in the 21st century. One in three Americans will have a brain or nervous system disorder sometime in their life, and the cost of treating brain disorders is nearly \$1.5 trillion each year. The BRAIN Initiative is revolutionizing our understanding of the brain and offering hope for the millions of individuals impacted by brain diseases and conditions.

Significant strides in neuroscience research have been made in the past few years. In October 2024, an international scientific team unveiled a comprehensive neural map of an adult fruit fly brain, detailing over 50 million connections between more than 140,000 neurons. This groundbreaking study constitutes the largest and most complete wiring diagram of an adult animal brain and serves as a stepping-stone to mapping the human brain.¹ More recently, the

¹ <https://braininitiative.nih.gov/news-events/blog/fruit-fly-brain-map-and-wiring-diagram-major-milestone-neuroscience>

program launched the BRAIN Initiative Cell Census Network (BICCN), a collaborative effort to systematically identify and classify brain cell types and expand data-sharing capabilities to enhance collaboration among researchers.²

Another recent breakthrough study investigated the use of intracortical micro-stimulation (ICMS) in the brain region responsible for processing sensory input from the arms and hands. Researchers tested an ICMS system on participants with spinal cord injuries. This groundbreaking research uncovered new insights into how the brain interprets artificial sensory signals, bringing science one step closer to integrating advanced bionic limbs that can move according to brain command and can feed back sensory information from artificial limb to brain.³

Despite continued progress and growing opportunity, the BRAIN Initiative has faced decreased funding in recent years, reducing its capabilities. Due to the drop in 21st Century Cures funding and the lack of additional discretionary funding, the BRAIN Initiative received only \$402 million in FY 2024—roughly a 40 percent cut from the previous year’s appropriation. The significant funding reduction has impacted the BRAIN Initiative’s capacity to support potential groundbreaking research, with only 50 percent of proposals being funded in FY 2024. With flat discretionary funding in FY 2025, the BRAIN Initiative will face an additional \$81 million cut, resulting in fewer than 20 percent of research proposals being funded. These cuts impede new clinical neurologic advancement for thousands of those with debilitating brain diseases and conditions. Ultimately, we strongly encourage you to further your support for the BRAIN Initiative to ensure that these lifesaving advancements in neuroscience continue.

Further funding cuts for the BRAIN Initiative in FY 2026 will limit its ability to advance research, support new studies, and spark discoveries that revolutionize understanding of brain function. We urge you to support this important program in FY 2026 to ensure continued innovative research and improved health for all Americans. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for your continued commitment to advancing medical research. If you have questions or would like further information, please reach out to Katie Sale at ksale@americanbraincoalition.org.

Sincerely,

American Brain Coalition
A Nation of Hope
AcademyHealth
Alliance for Aging Research
Alliance for Patient Access
Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy
American Academy of Neurology
American Association on Health and Disability

² <https://braininitiative.nih.gov/research/tools-and-technologies-brain-cells-and-circuits/brain-initiative-cell-census-network>

³ <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/nih-research-matters/creating-artificial-sense-touch>

American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Brain Foundation
American College of Clinical Pharmacy
American College of Neuropsychopharmacology
American Epilepsy Society
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Neurological Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association Services
American Society for Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery
American Society of Human Genetics
American Stroke Association
Angels of Epilepsy, Inc.
Anxiety & Depression Association of America
Association of University Professors of Neurology
BCI Pioneers Coalition
BDSRA Foundation
Belgian Brain Council
Benign Essential Blepharospasm Research Foundation
Black Women's Health Imperative
Boston University
Brain Aneurysm Foundation
Brain Injury Association of America
CACNA1A Foundation
Canavan Foundation
Caregiver Action Network
CEAFA
Center for Law, Brain & Behavior, Harvard Medical School
Cerebral Palsy Research Network
Child Neurology Foundation
Child Neurology Society
Childhood Brain Tumor Foundation, Inc.
Chronic Migraine Awareness
Coalition to Cure CHD2
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Cory Heideran Charitable Foundation
Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology (COGDOP)
Council on Social Work Education
Cover My Mental Health
CSNK2A1 Foundation
Cure Alzheimer's Fund
Cure Brain Disease
cureCADASIL

CURE Epilepsy
CureSHANK
Danny Did Foundation
Dementia Society of America
Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)
Dravet Syndrome Foundation
Dub15q Alliance
Dysphonia International
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy, and Action
Epilepsies Action Network (EAN)
Epilepsy Alliance America
Epilepsy Foundation of America
Epitome of Epilepsy
FAM177A1 Research Fund
FamiliesSCN2A Foundation Inc.
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences
Friedreich's Ataxia Research Alliance (FARA)
GABA-A Alliance
Gerontological Society of America
GRIN2B Foundation
HardyHandz Foundation
Headache Cooperative of the Pacific
Hellenic Brain Council
Hereditary Disease Foundation
Hope for HIE
Hope for Hypothalamic Hamartomas
Huntington's Disease Society of America
Hydrocephalus Association
I AM ALS
IEEE Brain
International Alliance for Pediatric Stroke
International Bipolar Foundation
International Essential Tremor Foundation
International Foundation for CDKL5 Research
International OCD Foundation
KCNQ2 Cure Alliance
Koolen-de Vries Syndrome Foundation
KPTN Alliance
Lakeshore Foundation
LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)
Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome (LGS) Foundation
Lundbeck Pharmaceuticals

M-CM Network
Maryland Rural Health Association
Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
McLean Hospital
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute
Men's Brain Health Initiative
MdDS Balance Disorder Foundation
Miles for Migraine
MLD Foundation
My Kool Brother
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Association for Biomedical Research
National Association of Hispanic Nurses
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Ataxia Foundation
National Headache Foundation
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Network of Depression Centers
National Organization for Tardive Dyskinesia
Neurocritical Care Society
Neurotech Network
Norse Institute
North American Neuromodulation Society
Northwest Noggin
NR2F1 Foundation
Otsuka Pharmaceuticals
Parkinson's Foundation
Pediatric Epilepsy Research Consortium
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation
Project 8p Foundation
PURA Syndrome Foundation
Rare Epilepsy Network Coordinating Committee
Reason for Hope
Rural Minds
Simply Neuroscience
Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology
Society for Neuroscience
Society for Public Health Education
Society of Experimental Psychologists
South Carolina Advocates for Epilepsy
Southern Headache Society
Spinal CSF Leak Foundation

STXBP1 Foundation
SynGAP Research Fund dba CURE SYNGAP1
The Association for Frontotemporal Degeneration
The Bee Foundation for Brain Aneurysm Prevention
The Brain Donor Project
The Cute Syndrome Foundation
The Friedman Brain Institute
The Headache and Migraine Policy Forum
The LCC Foundation
The Mac Parkman Foundation
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Rory Belle Foundation
The Salk Institute
The STARR Coalition
The Sturge-Weber Foundation
Tourette Association of America
TSC Alliance
University at Albany, State University of New York
University of Iowa
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Walt's Waltz
When The Trumpet Sounds
YWHAG Research Foundation

cc: The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Appropriations