



October 22, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Vice Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Blunt, and Ranking Member Murray:

The 197 undersigned organizations and institutions representing patients and caregivers, health providers, faculty and students, scientists, policy professionals, employers, and insurers are very concerned about the future of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) given the proposed termination of the agency by the House Appropriations Committee and the proposed 35 percent cut to the agency's base budget by the Senate Appropriations Committee. We understand lawmakers face difficult choices in funding myriad priorities with increasingly limited resources, but deep cuts to AHRQ in the current fiscal environment are pennywise and pound foolish. As you work to enact final spending legislation for fiscal year (FY) 2016, **we hope Congress will work together to enact sequestration relief and restore AHRQ's budget authority to \$364 million.**

AHRQ is the only federal research agency with the sole purpose of producing evidence to make health care safer; of higher quality; more accessible, equitable, and affordable; and to ensure that the evidence is understood and used. AHRQ-funded research, tools, and datasets are being used in health settings across the nation to help us understand and improve a complex and costly health system so that we can achieve better outcomes for more people at greater value. AHRQ's research and data help Americans get their money's worth when it comes to health care. We need more of it, not less.

We know difficult budget decisions must be made, but cutting AHRQ takes our country in the wrong direction. Our nation spends \$3 trillion annually on health care – the largest share of which are federal purchases through Medicare, Medicaid, the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan, insurance exchanges, TRICARE, and veterans' health care. Americans deserve reliable information on how to deliver the best possible care, at the greatest value, with the best outcomes. AHRQ-funded health services research provides those answers. Without AHRQ and the health services research that can determine what treatments work best, for whom, and in

what settings, the cures and treatments developed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will fall short on their promise to patients, and effective prevention strategies developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will fail to reach Americans where they live, learn, and work.

We recognize the reduction in AHRQ's budget authority is largely a function of the historically low and grossly inadequate allocation provided for health research and other critical programs under the sequestered spending caps. But without a dedicated funding stream for AHRQ's important work, it's misguided to assume that other agencies would absorb this portfolio given pressures they face in fulfilling their own specific mandates amidst budgetary constraints. Health services research—through AHRQ—needs a dedicated funding stream. It's the optimal way to ensure the generation of evidence and data to make the practice of health care safer, more effective, and more affordable for all Americans.

For more information on the Friends of AHRQ, contact Lisa Simpson at 202.292.6700 or [lisa.simpson@academyhealth.org](mailto:lisa.simpson@academyhealth.org).

Sincerely,

AACC

Academic Pediatric Association

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

AcademyHealth

Adult Congenital Heart Association

Alliance for Aging Research

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

American Academy of Dermatology Association

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine

American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Association for Dental Research

American Association for Physician Leadership

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine

American Association of Nurse Anesthetists

American Association of Nurse Assessment Coordination (AANAC)

American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN)

American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

American Association on Health and Disability

American Board of Medical Specialties

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Chiropractic Association

American College of Cardiology (ACC)

American College of Clinical Pharmacy

American College of Nurse Midwives

American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine

American College of Physicians

American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)  
American Federation of Teachers Nurses and Health Professionals  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Heart Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Student Association  
American Nurses Association  
American Occupational Therapy Association  
American Optometric Association  
American Organization of Nurse Executives  
American Pediatric Society  
American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Pediatric Nephrology  
American Society of Perianesthesia Nurses (ASPAN)  
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association  
American Statistical Association  
American Telemedicine Association  
American Thoracic Society  
AMIA (American Medical Informatics Association)  
APLU  
ARHP: the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals  
Association for Clinical and Translational Science  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Community Health Nursing Educators  
Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM)  
Association of Family Medicine Residency Directors (AFMRD)  
Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health  
Association of University Radiologists (AUR)  
Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America  
Baylor Scott & White Health  
Billings Clinic  
BJC HealthCare  
Boston University School of Public Health  
Brown University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center  
Clinical Research Forum  
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science

Coalition for Health Funding  
Columbia University Medical Center  
Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S. Public Health Service, Inc. (COA)  
Connecticut Certification Board  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Cornell University  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America  
Division of Health Policy and Management, University of Minnesota  
Doctor Evidence  
Duke University School of Medicine  
Duke University School of Nursing  
ECRI Institute  
Emory University  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
GBS|CIDP Foundation International  
Global Healthy Living Foundation  
Group Health Cooperative  
Guidelines International Network/North America (G-I-N/NA)  
Harvard University  
Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)  
Healthy Teen Network  
Heart Rhythm Society  
HIV Medicine Association  
Indiana University  
Integrated Health Interview Series  
International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium  
International Society of Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses (ISPN)  
Kaiser Permanente  
Lakeshore Foundation  
March of Dimes  
Mayo Clinic  
Medica Research Institute  
Michigan State University  
Minnesota Population Center  
Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine  
NAPHSIS: National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems  
National Alopecia Areata Foundation  
National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH)  
National Association of State and Territorial AIDS Directors  
National Athletic Trainers' Association  
National Black Nurses Association  
National Business Group on Health  
National Center for Health Research  
National Coalition for Hospice and Palliative Care  
National Coalition on Health Care  
National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA)  
National Gerontological Nurses Association

National Hispanic Medical Association  
National Kidney Foundation  
National League for Nursing  
National Nursing Centers Consortium  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
North American Primary Care Research Group (NAPCRG)  
North Carolina Society for Health Education  
Nurses Organization of Veterans Affairs (NOVA)  
Oncology Nursing Society  
Oregon Health & Science University  
Palo Alto Medical Foundation Research Institute  
Partners Healthcare / Brigham and Women's Hospital  
Pediatric Policy Council  
Penn Medicine  
Penn State University  
Physician Assistant Education Association  
Population Association of America  
Public Citizen  
Public Health Institute  
Pulmonary Hypertension Association  
QSI NextGen Healthcare  
Research!America  
RTI International  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School  
Saint Francis Care  
Scleroderma Foundation  
Society for Academic Emergency Medicine  
Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine  
Society for Medical Decision Making  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Society for Public Health Education  
Society for Women's Health Research  
Society of General Internal Medicine  
Society of Teachers of Family Medicine  
Spina Bifida Association  
The Center for Healthcare Organizational and Innovation Research (CHOIR), School of Public Health, UC-Berkeley  
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia  
The Johns Hopkins University  
The Marfan Foundation  
The New York Academy of Medicine  
The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
The Sturge-Weber Foundation  
Trust for America's Health  
University of California  
University of California, Davis  
University of California, Los Angeles  
University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus

University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center  
University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) Community Providers Services  
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine  
University of Rochester  
University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine  
University of Washington  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
University of South Florida Health  
Vanderbilt University  
Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center  
Washington University in St. Louis  
Wateree AIDS Task Force  
Weill Cornell Medical College  
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease  
Yale University