

# Grassroots Toolkit

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## FAQs

### **What is the Rally for Medical Research Hill Day and who is participating?**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Rally for Medical Research Hill Day will be held on Thursday, September 14, 2023, in Washington, DC. More than [350 national organizations and institutions](#) are supporting this event and will have advocates participating in meetings with congressional offices and/or engaging in grassroots activities. The Hill Day will unite advocates from across the country and across the medical research advocacy community to urge Congress to continue to make funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) a national priority and to thank members of Congress for their extraordinary support for the NIH over the last seven years. This effort will raise awareness about the critical need for robust, sustained, and predictable funding increases for the NIH in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 and beyond to improve health, spur more progress, inspire more hope, and save more lives.

This Hill Day would never have been possible without the NIH research that led to the rapid development of tests, vaccines, and treatments. In addition, each person who is participating in the Rally – whether in-person or during the Day of Action – has their own story about how medical research has made a difference in their lives.

We encourage those who cannot participate in the meetings on Capitol Hill to use an action alert and other grassroots resources that will be posted on the Rally website at <http://rallyformedicalresearch.org>. September 14 will be a grassroots “National Day of Action” during which advocates will be encouraged to contact their members of Congress via email or social media to urge support for NIH funding.

**What is the goal of the event?**

The goal of the Rally for Medical Research Hill Day is to speak with a unified voice to House and Senate offices on Capitol Hill about the importance of investing in the NIH to improve the health and economic security of our nation.

**What is the role of the grassroots networks?**

Networks of patients, scientists, survivors, clinicians, students, and other advocates across the country will play a key role in the success and reach of the Hill Day. Given the millions of people who are represented through the participating organizations, the effort presents a tremendous opportunity to send a powerful, coordinated message to Capitol Hill.

We encourage organizations from across the medical research advocacy community to engage their grassroots networks on September 14 in a “National Day of Action.” Participating organizations will be provided with a simple, customizable, action-oriented message that can be sent to their members and volunteers. Advocates will be asked to take specific actions on September 14 such as:

- Send an email to congressional offices
- Tweet at members of Congress with a message or post on the member’s Facebook page
- Write letters to the editor and place op-eds in newspapers across the country in September

## Suggested Timeline for Coordinated Action

- Today: Tell your network about the National Day of Action with links to online tools and tips, including the [Rally website](#)
- Sept. 13: Remind your networks again to take action on Thurs., Sept. 14
- Sept. 14: National Day of Action coinciding with the Rally for Medical Research Hill Day

## Key Messages

➤ **Now is the time for Congress to Work Together to Support the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Invest in Medical Research!**

- We thank Congress for providing NIH with an increase of \$17 billion over the last eight years, or 58%, including an increase of \$2.5 billion in FY 2023. We are grateful for Congress' sustained efforts to make funding medical research a national priority, and we ask to continue this momentum in FY 2024.
- We also deeply appreciate the Senate Appropriations Committee's bipartisan bill that preserves funding for medical research and reverses the House's proposed cuts. To capitalize on the abundance of scientific opportunity, strengthen our medical research workforce, drive economic growth, and ensure that we continue Congress' investment in restoring the purchasing power lost after 15 years of inflation-adjusted declines, the medical research advocacy community joined together in recommending at least \$51 billion for the NIH's base program level for FY 2024.

- It is critical that we continue this momentum, so we call on Congress to provide the highest possible appropriation increase for NIH in FY 2024 and ensure that the funding provided is at least at the Senate Appropriations Committee funding level of \$49.22 billion.
  - We also urge the House and Senate leadership to complete work on FY 2024 spending bills as quickly as possible to avoid delays and disruptions caused by continuing resolutions.
- **NIH funding is important to improving the health of patients across the world, advancing scientific discoveries, developing new treatments and cures, and strengthening our national, regional, and local economies.**
- Medical research funded through the NIH, the largest source of public funding for medical research in the world, has been a driving force behind many decades of advances that have improved the health of people in every state and community, providing cures and hope for patients and caregivers.

Thanks in large part to NIH-funded research, people across the country are living longer, healthier lives. These investments have led to medical discoveries, improved health outcomes, reduced health disparities, and alleviated suffering.

- NIH funding contributed to 354 of 356 new drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration between 2010 and 2019.

- Investment in medical research can reduce future costs of care. The vast majority of our health care dollars are spent on treating chronic diseases that could be managed more effectively with better therapies or, in some cases, prevented altogether. We can meet these challenges head-on, but to do so, medical research must be a strong national priority.
- The funding provided to the NIH does more than just save lives – it fuels the U.S. economy and creates jobs in our communities. In FY 2022, research funded by the NIH supported nearly 568,585 jobs and more than \$96 billion in economic activity across the U.S, supporting researchers, labs, hospitals and universities, and businesses large and small.

#### Additional Background on FY 2024

- On July 13, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), Education, and Related Agencies passed its Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill that would provide \$44.66 billion for NIH base funding, a decrease of \$2.8 billion.
- On July 27, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed its Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill that would provide \$49.22 billion in base funding for the NIH, an increase of \$1.77 billion.

Sample Action Alert Email/Letter

Dear Senator/Representative [Last Name]:

I applaud you and your colleagues in Congress for working in a bipartisan fashion to provide strong funding increases for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) over the last seven years, including an increase of \$2.5 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023. I am writing to respectfully request that you continue the momentum of robust, sustained and predictable funding growth by supporting a FY 2024 spending bill that provides the highest possible increase to the NIH base budget in FY 2024. I urge you to provide the highest possible appropriation increase for NIH in FY 2024. The medical research community has recommended at least \$51 billion and urges Congress to appropriate no less than the Senate mark of \$49.22. I also ask that you urge House and Senate leadership to complete work on the FY 2024 spending bill as quickly as possible to avoid the delays and disruptions caused by continuing resolutions.

NIH-funded research means hope for millions of patients and their families who are affected by hundreds of diseases. Robust, predictable, and sustained funding for NIH is an investment necessary to pursue our nation's commitment to lifesaving treatments and sustain our nation's global leadership in medical research.

Investments in NIH also spur economic growth in communities across the medical research enterprise and across the nation by supporting jobs in universities, medical schools, drug manufacturers, and the thousands of businesses large and small that support them. In FY 2022 alone, NIH

research contributed to more than \$96 billion in new economic activity and more than 568,000 jobs.

We live in an extraordinary time when the scientific opportunities are limitless and our ability to translate new knowledge to both save and improve the quality of life of patients is simply astounding. In fact, we have never been better positioned to seize the unprecedented opportunities to bring hope to millions of patients and their loved ones everywhere.

On behalf of millions of patients, survivors, and their loved ones, I call upon you and your colleagues to work in a bipartisan manner to support the highest possible increase to the NIH base budget in FY 2024.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]



Sample X (Twitter) Posts

**On X (formerly known as Twitter), please use the hashtag #RallyMedRes and #FundNIH.** Remember, these posts are helpful to not only mobilize your network and promote the Rally, but posts can also gain the attention of policymakers as they see their handles appear in our post.

*Download a corresponding social graphic:*

<https://aacr.ent.box.com/v/23RallyMedRes/file/1261869443953>

Below are sample posts to consider:

- Dear [@CongressMember], please invest in the @NIH for the health & economic security of our nation. RallyForMedicalResearch.org  
#RallyMedRes #FundNIH
- Research means hope! Join the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual #RallyMedRes from anywhere in the US by participating in the National Day of Action at  
Rallyformedicalresearch.org
- Thanks [@CongressMember] for your commitment to medical research! Grateful to have your support for @NIH funding. #RallyMedRes #FundNIH
- #NIH research is the basis for countless treatments, therapies, and cures. Sustained, predictable funding growth ensures that we can continue to provide hope for millions of patients battling life-threatening and chronic conditions. #RallyMedRes #FundNIH
- Today's science could lead to a breakthrough treatment for a chronic or life-threatening condition that affects millions. To deliver on that promise we need sustained, predictable funding for @NIH. #RallyMedRes #FundNIH

### Sample Facebook Posts

We encourage you to post to your own Facebook pages and to the pages of members of Congress. When adding a link to your post, please delete the URL's text from the post once Facebook automatically adds a link preview.

- I am someone/I have a loved one who is affected by [Disease or Condition]. That's why federal support of medical research is so important to me. Congress should invest in the NIH for the health and economic security of our nation, so join me and @[Organization Facebook Profile] in taking action today. <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>
- Research funded by the NIH is the cornerstone of new advances against the toughest diseases we face, and it fuels jobs and economic growth across the United States. Tell Congress: Medical research should be a top priority. <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>
- Medical research is important to me because [*Personal Reason*]. That's why I'm joining the @[Organization Facebook Profile] to rally for medical research and urge Congress invest in the NIH! Add your voice at the link below! <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>

#IRallyFor Selfie Campaign

Participants in the Rally Hill Day as well as those participating in the Day of Action are encouraged to post a selfie to social media platforms (particularly Facebook and X/Twitter) that reads “#IRallyfor \_\_\_\_\_ ” to promote their personal connection to the Rally for Medical Research. [Click here](#) to download and print your own #IRallyFor sign!

### Sample Text Messages

If your organization has the capability to send text alerts to your network of advocates, you may wish to use a message similar to these:

- Tell Congress that medical research should be a national priority. It only takes a minute! <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org>
- Let your member of Congress know that medical research is important to you! Reach out to them here: <https://rallyformedicalresearch.org> [you may wish to insert the link to your own engagement page instead]

### Sample Letter to the Editor<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from a sample Letter to the Editor created by the Coalition for the Life Sciences and available at [www.coalitionforlifesciences.org](http://www.coalitionforlifesciences.org)

[DATE]

To the Editor:

**First way to start the letter:** I want to thank Representative [Last Name] and/or Senator(s) [Last Name] for their continued and strong support for medical research funding.

**A second way to start the letter:** As Congress continues to work on many challenging issues, I urge Representative [Last Name] and Senator(s) [Last Name] to support robust funding growth for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

**Body of the text:** NIH research funding is an investment in our country's future. The funds are used to support the development of treatments and cures for a wide range of diseases and conditions. In addition, it supports talented scientists in every state—including this one—who every day are working to discover critical medical breakthroughs.

**Insert: Personal story**

Robust, sustained, and predictable funding for NIH is critical if the agency is to continue to serve as the world's preeminent medical research institution and our best hope for finding cures, improving treatments, and gaining a better understanding of the complex causes of diseases that affect millions of people nationwide. The agency supports research that is too expensive and risky for private industry to undertake alone but has led to major advancements in our understanding of rare diseases and disorders, as well as historically prevalent diseases like Alzheimer's, cancer, and Parkinson's.

I will be watching for our congressional delegation's leadership on this issue.

Sample Op-Ed<sup>2</sup>

**Op-Ed: Medical Research Should be Top Priority for Congress**

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from a sample Op-ed developed by Research!America and available at [www.SaveResearch.org](http://www.SaveResearch.org)

Federal funding for medical research, coupled with private-sector innovation, has revolutionized medicine in this country and throughout the world. HIV is no longer a death sentence, polio has been virtually eradicated, and we now have vaccines and antivirals that reduce hospitalizations from the COVID-19, the flu, and other dangerous infections. New therapies are saving the lives of patients with cancers that were once thought untreatable.

[Insert Personal Story]

There's no question that a strong investment in medical research reaps significant benefits for patients and future generations. Over the last eight years, Congress has made medical research a priority by increasing funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by \$17 billion, or 58 percent. While these boosts are welcome and should be applauded, ongoing robust, sustained, and predictable funding is required to ensure that progress continues.

This isn't just a health issue; it's also an economic one. In Fiscal Year 2022 alone, NIH research contributed to over \$96 billion in new economic activity and supported 568,585 jobs. Continued, strong investment in the NIH is vital to supporting jobs at research universities, medical schools and independent research institutes, as well as in the device, drug and biologics industries, and the thousands of businesses large and small that support our nation's research enterprise. [Insert examples]

Medical research is fundamental to our health and economic prosperity. We need a strong commitment from Congress to make NIH funding a national priority. Only

with this commitment can we strengthen our research infrastructure and eliminate current and emerging health threats.

Sample Press Release

**For Immediate Release**

For media inquiries, contact [Name] at [Email] or [Phone].

**[Fill in organization here] Joins Rally for Medical Research Hill Day to Advocate for NIH Funding**

*Annual event brings more than 350 organizations together to improve health, inspire hope, and save lives*

[City, State]— [Fill in organization here] will be one of more than 350 organizations participating in the eleventh annual [Rally for Medical Research Hill Day](#) in Washington, DC on September 14 in support of robust, sustained, and predictable annual funding increases for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Hill Day participants will urge members of Congress to continue their steadfast support for NIH by providing the agency the highest possible increase to the NIH base budget in FY 2024. The medical research community has recommended at least \$51 billion and urges Congress to appropriate no less than the Senate mark of \$49.22 million.

[Organization’s expert/leadership quote]

On September 13, the Rally for Medical Research reception will feature remarks from NIH leaders and congressional champions of medical research.

On September 14, more than 250 scientists, health professionals, and patient advocates from nearly every state will meet with House and Senate members and their staff to emphasize the importance and impact of investing in NIH:

- 95 percent of the NIH budget goes directly to research awards, programs, and centers; training programs; and research and development contracts.



- Each year, NIH awards more than 50,000 research and training grants. These grants support approximately 300,000 researchers at more than 2,500 universities and organizations in every state.
- NIH-funded research contributed to every one of the 356 new drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration between 2010 and 2019.
- In FY 2022, research funded by NIH supported more than 568,000 jobs and more than \$68 billion in economic activity across the U.S.

In conjunction with the Hill Day, advocates across the country will participate in the Rally National Day of Action. Partner organizations will encourage their communities to contact their members of Congress via phone, email, and social media to urge their support for the highest possible appropriation increase for NIH in FY 2024.

The Rally for Medical Research initiative was launched in April 2013 to bring together the entire medical research community to urge Congress to make NIH funding a national priority. Through the annual Hill Day, the Rally for Medical Research continues to raise awareness about the critical need for continued investment in NIH to improve health, spur progress, inspire hope, and save lives.

# # #

Follow the Rally on Twitter: [@RallyforNIH](https://twitter.com/RallyforNIH), [#RallyMedRes](https://twitter.com/RallyMedRes), and [#FundNIH](https://twitter.com/FundNIH)

[Organization's Boilerplate Language]

RALLY<sub>FOR</sub> **MEDICAL RESEARCH**<sup>TM</sup> 

Together for More **Progress**, More **Hope**, More **Life**.<sup>TM</sup>