

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 12, 2013

The Honorable Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Collins:

The House of Representatives has demonstrated strong support for the core mission of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to invest in basic biomedical research that can lead to better health and cures for diseases. With increasingly tight Federal budgets, every dollar invested at the NIH becomes even more precious.

A March 13, 2013, editorial in *Nature* voiced concerns over excessive and unfocused spending at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The *Nature* editorial, citing an article from "The Cancer Letter," pointed out that NCI spent about \$45 million in Fiscal Year 2012 on the NCI's Office of Communications and Education (OCE), almost double what the Food and Drug Administration spent on communications, including drug and food safety announcements. The editorial further stated that the OCE allotment would cover more than 100 R01 research grants. The OCE spending concern comes at a time of cuts to research from budgetary sequestration and when the NCI success rate for grant applications is at an all-time low of 14 percent.

Given the need for the NIH to find ways to control spending, our Committees are interested in examining the expenditures of the 27 Institutes and Centers (IC) within the NIH for separate offices of communications or public relations as well as the NIH Office of the Director.

Pursuant to Rules X and XI of the U.S. House of Representatives, to help us understand the amount of funds used by NIH and its Institutes and Centers for communications or public relations purposes, we ask that you provide written responses to the following requests for each NIH IC:

1. Identify the Office of Communication and Education or similar type function.
2. List public relations or communications contracts, agreements or other similar mechanisms.
3. Provide the annual office budget and contract expenditures for Fiscal Years 2010, 2011, 2012 and projected for Fiscal Year 2013 for each office or public relations function identified in (1) and (2).

4. Provide the total amount of NIH-wide expenditures for each of the identified fiscal years spent on any and all communications, public relations, or public education activities.
5. Provide a list of ideas for focusing or controlling such expenditures such as consolidating administrative tasks and/or finding any funds that could be reprogrammed for research.

Please provide your reply by April 25, 2013. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Alan Slobodin of the Energy and Commerce Committee staff at (202) 225-2927 and John Bartrum of the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-3508. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

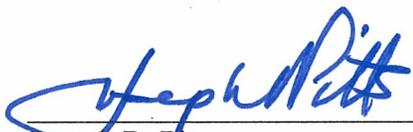
Sincerely,



Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce



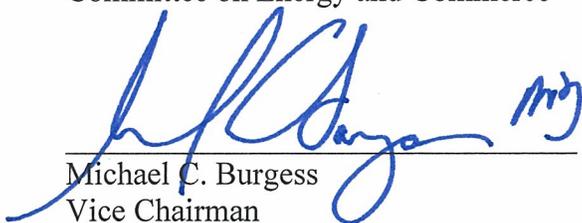
Jack Kingston
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations



Joseph R. Pitts
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Rodney Alexander
Vice Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations



Michael C. Burgess
Vice Chairman
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Joe Barton
Chairman Emeritus
Committee on Energy and Commerce



Marsha Blackburn
Vice Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

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cc: The Honorable Henry A. Waxman, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations