

The Coalition for Pediatric Medical Research

Akron Children's Hospital
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Boston Children's Hospital
Children's of Alabama
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta
Children's Hospital Colorado
Children's Hospital Los Angeles
Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC
Children's Hospital of Wisconsin
Children's Mercy Hospital
Children's National Medical Center

Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
C.S. Mott Children's Hospital
LeBonheur Children's Hospital
Nationwide Children's Hospital
Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital
Primary Children's Medical Center
Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital
Seattle Children's
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
St. Louis Children's Hospital
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

January 22, 2013

The Honorable Fred Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States Congress
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
United States Congress
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Pitts
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
Subcommittee on Health
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
Subcommittee on Health
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Dear Chairmen Upton and Pitts and Ranking Members Waxman and Pallone:

On behalf of the Coalition for Pediatric Medical Research, representing leading children's hospitals responsible for treating our nation's sickest children today and conducting research to develop the therapies, treatments, and cures of tomorrow, we are writing to offer our strong endorsement of **H.R. 225, the National Pediatric Research Network Act**. This legislation is needed to strengthen our nation's pediatric research enterprise, and we urge you and your colleagues to advance and enact the bill this Congress.

The challenges to our pediatric research system are many. These include the funding constraints faced by the biomedical research community more broadly as well as barriers that often prevent pediatric research institutions and initiatives from access to critical programs and services intended to bolster research capacity, acquire or offset the costs of advanced research resources and infrastructure, and to support the next generation of researchers striving to make pediatrics their focus. A growing body of evidence overwhelmingly demonstrates that therapies and interventions delivered early in life – during infancy, childhood and adolescence – prevents diseases and their life-long adverse impacts on health and economic contributions to society. Similarly, research on pediatric populations is useful for understanding the origin of adult-onset diseases and is useful in preventing and treating such conditions. When pediatric research as a whole struggles, so too do our nation's children because of

the reduced focus and funding to pediatric-based disorders and because of limited access to innovations in care and treatments that help improve life and reduce healthcare costs.

The *National Pediatric Research Network Act* will authorize the establishment of a well-proven and evidence-based networked approach for addressing pediatric research. It will enable the National Institutes of Health to support multi-institution consortia conducting high-impact research into the most challenging pediatric issues of our day, and will strengthen our collective focus on pediatric rare diseases. We believe this approach is particularly cost-effective because research networks foster high levels of collaboration, coordination, and resource sharing.

Every single day, our institutions care for tens of thousands of children, a number of whom are suffering from the most deadly and complex diseases. We strive each and every day to provide optimal levels of care informed by the latest scientific and medical knowledge. Thanks to research breakthroughs achieved over the years, we have made progress in treating a number of conditions that not too long ago were considered near-certain death sentences. But making continued progress to heal children today and tomorrow will require a renewed commitment to our nation's children.

We urge you to recognize the need that exists and to enact the *National Pediatric Research Network Act* this Congress. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this issue further, please feel free to have your staff contact Nick Manetto with the Coalition at 202.312.7499 or nicholas.manetto@faegrebd.com.

Sincerely,

David A. Williams, MD
Chief, Division of Hematology/Oncology and
Director, Translational Research, Boston
Children's Hospital
Associate Chairman, Department of Pediatric
Oncology, Dana Farber Cancer Institute
Leland Fikes Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard
Medical School

Arnold W. Strauss, MD
Rachford Professor and Chair
Director, Cincinnati Children's Research
Foundation
Chief Medical Officer, Cincinnati Children's
Hospital Medical Center

William W. Hay, Jr., MD
University of Colorado School of Medicine and
Children's Hospital Colorado
Chair, Advocacy Committee, American Pediatric
Society