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July 30, 2012

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SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH  
IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

**HOWARD J. SILVER,**  
**PH.D.**  
*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

**KENNETH PREWITT,**  
**PH.D.**  
*PRESIDENT*

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
United States of House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We the undersigned national organizations and research institutions are writing to express our concerns regarding several provisions in the Fiscal Year 2013 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Act that micromanage the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in addition to freezing its budget; thus limiting the agency's ability to support the most promising, scientifically-driven research. **Specifically, we are opposed to language in the bill that prohibits the NIH to use funds "for any economic research programs, projects or activities."**

As you know, the NIH mission is to support scientifically rigorous, peer-reviewed research, including basic and applied behavioral and social science research. Economic research, specifically research on the linkages between socioeconomic status and health outcomes in the elderly and achievement and health outcomes in children, has been an integral part of the interdisciplinary science NIH has supported historically. The agency's investment has yielded key data, methodologies and substantive insights on some of the most important and pressing issues facing the U.S.

For example:

- NIH funded surveys such as the Health and Retirement Survey, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, parts of the National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experiences, and surveys on International Aging and retirement provide data necessary to monitor and detect changes in important socioeconomic trends in health.
- Economic modeling and methodologies and the longitudinal data from these surveys enable researchers to disentangle cause from effect and measure the relative significance of the different socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health related trends.
- Results of NIH funded economic research provide insights into important topics such as the functioning of the health care system, design and effects of health insurance and financing, diffusion of new health technologies, cost analysis and projections of health care, retirement date, savings, wealth accumulation and assets, and health-employment nexus and relationship.

NIH support of economics is also playing a key role in nurturing new fields of research such as the economics of aging, neuroeconomics and behavioral economics. Other agencies, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Social Security Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Administration on Aging, rely on the NIH to review, fund, and disseminate research findings that these agencies can translate into informed policy and programmatic decisions.

As the bill moves forward, we urge the Committee to reconsider the implications of this language and remove it from the final funding package whether the bill moves independently or is made part of a larger spending measure.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

AcademyHealth

Academy of Radiology Research

Alliance for Aging Research

American Association for the Advancement of Science

American Association for Public Opinion Research

American Association of Anatomists

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

American Economic Association

American Educational Research Association

American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR)

American Heart Association

American Physiological Society

American Political Science Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Psychological Association

American Psychosomatic Society

American Society of Clinical Oncology

American Society of Nephrology (ASN)

American Sociological Association

American Statistical Association

American Thoracic Society

Association for Psychological Science

Association of American Geographers  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Universities  
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges  
Association of Population Centers  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Biophysical Society  
Brown University  
California Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors (CAADAC)  
ChangeLab Solutions  
Coalition for Imaging and Bioengineering Research  
Coalition for the Advancement of Health Through Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (CAHT-BSSR)  
Coalition to Promote Research (CPR)  
Columbia University Medical Center  
Connecticut Commission on Health Equity  
Consortium of Academic Health Centers for Integrative Medicine  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council of Graduate Schools  
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics  
Council on Social Work Education  
Duke University  
Duke University School of Medicine  
Economic History Association  
Emerald Logic  
Emory University  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences  
Fight Colorectal Cancer  
Global Alliance for the Prevention of Prematurity and Stillbirth  
Harvard University  
Indiana University  
International Certification and Reciprocity Consortium (IC&RC)  
Law and Society Association  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Mental Health America

Michigan State University  
Midwest Political Science Association  
NABE (National Association of Business Economics)  
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research (NAEVR)  
National Association of Social Workers  
North Carolina State University  
Northeastern University  
NYU Langone Medical Center  
Population Association of America  
Research!America  
Saint Louis University  
Social Science History Association  
Society for Research in Child Development  
Society for Women's Health Research  
Society of Government Economists  
Stanford University  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Ohio State University  
The Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Tulane University  
University of California, San Francisco  
University of Connecticut Health Center  
University of Maryland  
University of Michigan  
University of Rochester  
University of Southern California  
University of Vermont  
University of Virginia  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Vanderbilt University