



AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF RHEUMATOLOGY
EDUCATION • TREATMENT • RESEARCH

Specialists in Arthritis Care & Research

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November 22, 2011

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the American College of Rheumatology, please accept our very sincere appreciation for including a \$1 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health in the House Appropriations Committee draft fiscal year 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies funding bill. Your support of biomedical research and the vital work taking place at the NIH is critically important not only for the health of our patients but also for the short and long-term health of our economy.

Rheumatologists treat patients with arthritis and other rheumatic and musculoskeletal diseases. These conditions can be painful, debilitating, life threatening and costly. Biomedical research plays a pivotal role in advancing diagnostics, treatments, and prevention strategies for patients with chronic diseases. Advancements in arthritis-related research have helped to prevent disabilities, allowing patients to continue working or return to work and contribute to their communities and the economy.

In these financially challenging times, the ACR appreciates your dedication to funding for the NIH and maintenance of our nation's status as a leader in medical innovation. The ACR commends your leadership and commitment to medical progress and improving the health of all Americans. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Cooper, ACR director of government affairs, at acooper@rheumatology.org or (404) 633-3777.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

James R. O'Dell, MD
President
American College of Rheumatology