



May 14, 2026

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito

Chair

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

170 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Aderholt

Chair

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

272 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin

Ranking Member

Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies

141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro

Ranking Member

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for Full Funding of NIH Rehabilitation and Disability Research in FY 2027

Dear Chairs Moore Capito and Aderholt and Ranking Members Baldwin and DeLauro:

On behalf of the disability and rehabilitation research community, the undersigned individuals, organizations and institutions urge you to strongly support full funding for medical rehabilitation and disability-related research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In particular, ***we are requesting continued and robust funding for the National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research (NCMRR)*** within the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), in the FY 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

NCMRR supports approximately \$90 million in rehabilitation science annually and is statutorily designated as the agency within NIH to coordinate over \$900 million in rehabilitation and disability research conducted and supported across many of the NIH's 27 Institutes and Centers. Unlike many other NIH Institutes and Centers, the NCMRR does not receive a direct appropriation from Congress; instead, its funding is allocated as a percentage of the overall budget of NICHD. As such, we do not request a specific funding level for NICHD and NCMRR, but urge Congress to fully fund these important research agencies.

NCMRR and other NIH institutes and centers support biomedical and engineering research aimed at improving function, rehabilitation outcomes, and quality of life for individuals with disabilities due to injury, illness, or congenital conditions. Its portfolio includes critical work on stroke recovery, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, developmental and neuromuscular disorders, limb loss, and many other disabling conditions. NCMRR plays a key leadership role within NIH by coordinating rehabilitation science across institutes and fostering innovation in a way that maximizes the return on the federal investment in rehabilitation and disability science.

To strengthen coordination of rehabilitation science and disability research priorities across institutes, we urge the NIH to prioritize and implement the newly-published ***NIH Disability Health and Health Care Research Plan***. We are grateful the NIH issued this important strategic framework which marks a long-overdue commitment to addressing the comprehensive needs of people with disabilities and embedding disability health research issues across the NIH portfolio. The plan outlines actions to enhance data collection, support scientists with disabilities, promote study designs relevant to disability populations, and ensure that the needs of people with disabilities are identified and visible in the nation's health research agenda. ***We urge Congress to dedicate additional resources within the NIH Office of the Director to ensure effective implementation, including the establishment of a centralized disability research office to sustain cross-agency leadership and accountability.***

Thank you for your leadership and for your continued support of policies and programs that advance health, function, and opportunity for people with disabilities. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that medical rehabilitation and disability research remains a national priority in FY 2027 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Disability and Rehabilitation Research Coalition (DRRC) Members

Alliance for NIDILRR Grantees*

Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

American Association on Health & Disability*

American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine*

American Occupational Therapy Association*

American Physical Therapy Association*

American Spinal Injury Association

American Therapeutic Recreation Association

Association of Rehabilitation Nurses

Brain Injury Association of America*

National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics

RESNA

Spina Bifida Association
VisionServe Alliance

DRRC Steering Committee Member*

Additional Supporting Organizations

Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
Burn Survivors of New England
Consortium of MS Centers
COVID-19 Longhailer Advocacy Project
Craig Hospital
Indiana University School of Medicine
International Organization of MS Nurses
Lakeshore Foundation
Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors
Social Work Disability Justice League
The University of Florida
The University of Missouri-Kansas City's Institute for Human Development
The University of Pittsburgh
Vanderbilt Health

Supporting Individuals

Adjoa Manu
Portland, OR

Amber Hill
Augusta, GA

Alexandra Reyes
Chicago, IL

Amy Hartman
Pittsburgh, PA
Amy Hecht-Zizes

Alianna Higgins, MPH
Boston, MA

Ann Arbor, MI

Alicia Koontz
Pittsburgh, PA

Andrew Sprague
Pittsburgh, PA

Amanda Lindsey
Covington, LA

Andrew Tom
White Plains, NY

Angelle Sander
Houston, TX

Anjay Khandelwal
Akron, OH

Anna Quon
Boise, ID

Ariana Gopal
Bronx, NY

Arianna Caradonna
Farmington, CT

Brick Johnstone
Atlanta, GA

Candy Tefertiller
Denver, CO

Ceren Yarar-Fisher
Columbus, OH

Charles H. Bombardier, PhD
Bainbridge Island, WA

Christi VanHeulen
Grand Rapids, MI

Dana Kobrin
Baltimore, MD

Dana Waltzman
Indianapolis, IN

Danelle Heathman
Mandeville, LA

Daniel Carmines
Kennedale, TX

Danielle Powell
Birmingham, AL

David Greenhalgh
Davis, CA

Deandra Butler
Kansas City, MO

Dennis Compton
Mesa, AZ

Deron P Wilson
McDonough, GA

Diana Tenney-Laperriere
Clarksville, TN

Dmitry Esterov
Rochester, MN

Dot Nary PhD
Lawrence, KS

Dr Anthony Kline
Sewickley, PA

Elizabeth R. Skidmore
Pittsburgh, PA

Emily Shuman
Colorado Springs, CO

Erica Twardzik
Ann Arbor, MI

Eric Nguyeb
Huntington Beach, CA

Erika Trovato
White Plains, NY

Evan Zeldin
Cincinnati, OH

Flora Hammond, MD
Carmel, IN

Gale Whiteneck
Colorado Springs, CO

Gayathri Rajagopal
Morris Plains, NJ

George Wittenberg
Pittsburgh, PA

Gerry Koons, MD, PhD
Rehoboth Beach, DE

Guang Yue, PhD
West Orange, NJ

Haley Hicks, DO
Des Moines, IA

Haris Choudry
White Plains, NY

Heather Becker
Austin, TX

Heather Ma
Rochester, NY

Heather Warren
Coventry, RI

Heba Zoaeir
West Orange, NJ

Hellen Douglas
Lima, OH

Ian B Maitin MD
Stratford, NJ

Ilhom Akobirshoev
Waltham, MA

Inthira Chompranouvong
Martinsburg WV

Jacob T. Urbina, MD
Houston, TX

Jacqueline Garrett
Berkeley, CA

Jaime Hoza
La Plata, MD

James Goodwin
Woodridge, IL

James Thomas
Salem, IN

James W. Atchison, DO
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL

Jamie Ott
Seattle, WA

Jane Kim
Fairfax, VA

Jeanne M. Hoffman
Seattle, WA

Kechi Okwuchi
Fresno, TX

Jenn Raley Miller
Rancho Cordova, CA

Keith C. Bock
Honeoye Falls, NY

Jerri Davidson
Greenville, SC

Kelsey Zionskowski
Portland, OR

Jessica Kersey
St. Louis, MO

Kim Barker
Dallas, TX

John Latorre
Birmingham, AL

Kimberly Anderson, PhD
Cleveland, OH

Jonathan Arias
Allentown, PA

Kristen Dams-O'Connor
New York, NY

Joseph A. Roche
Detroit, MI

Laura Horvath
Cary, NC

Julia VanderMolen
Grand Rapids, MI

Laurin Bixby
Philadelphia, PA

Justin King
Farmington, CT

Leah Roth
Columbus, OH

Justin Huber
Indianapolis, IN

Lisa Staton
Chesterfield, VA

Justin Weppner
Roanoke, VA

Lynn Worobey
Oakmont, PA

Katherine Froehlich-Grobe
Parker, CO

Matthew Cylla
Northville, MI

Katlin Schultz
Gahanna, OH

Megan Andrews
New York, NY

Melissa Durochez
Cleveland, TX

Robert Scot Bush
Gainesville, FL

Michele Zaput
Bethpage, NY

Robin Jacob
San Antonio, TX

Monica Verduzco-Gutierrez
San Antonio, TX

Russ Sanders
Louisville, KY

Mustafa Rfat
St Louis, MO

Ryan Riss
Portland, OR

Nancy Cheak-Zamora
San Antonio, TX

Sandeep Subramanian
San Antonio, TX

Nandita Keole
Scottsdale, AZ

Sarah Taylor
Alameda, CA

Patricia M. West
East Lansing, MI

Scott R Olsen
Valrico, FL

Patrick Sparto
Wexford, PA

Shane Stone
San Diego, CA

Preetveer Kaur
White Plains, NY

Shanna Katz Kattark
Ann Arbor, MI

Rachel Fetterman
Cambridge, MA

Shannon Juengst
Houston, TX

Rachel Kudlak
Charleston, SC

Sharon Mosley
White Plains, NY

Raj Kumar
Yardley, PA

Shelly Hsieh
West Harrison, NY

Robert Lyon
Beaver, PA

Siam Ayon
NY

Sima Desai
Charlotte, NC

Whitney Luke, MD
Columbus, OH

Simon Driver
Boston, MA

William Tang
Salt Lake City, UT

Sonya R Pearson
Akron, OH

Yelena Bodien
Nashville, TN

Steve Gardner
Taylors, SC

Zachary Kurtz
Ann Arbor, MI

Susan Idol
Waitsfield, VT

Susan Robinson-Whelen
Houston, TX

Syreeta Nolan
San Diego, CA

The Rev. Susan Barnes
Newport, RI

Tina Barham
Martinsville, IN

Tracey Lane
Baltimore, MD

Tyler G. James
Ann Arbor, MI

Valerie Bresier
Bloomfield, NJ

Wendy Beukelman
Thornton, CO