

June 5, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education

Dear Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chair Baldwin, and Ranking Member Capito:

The American Geriatrics Society (AGS) is a national non-profit organization comprised of 6,000+ geriatrics healthcare professionals and basic and clinical researchers specializing in aging. The AGS believes in a just society – one where we all are supported by and able to contribute to communities and where ageism, ableism, classism, homophobia, racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of bias and discrimination no longer impact healthcare access, quality, and outcomes for older adults and their caregivers. We advocate for policies and programs that support the health, independence, and quality of life of all of us as we age.

The AGS appreciates your collective support of the National Institute on Aging (NIA). Since it was established in 1974, the NIA has supported groundbreaking research on the diseases and disorders of aging which has improved the health and quality of life of all Americans as we age. We respectfully request your support for increased fiscal year (FY) 2025 funding for aging research efforts at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and NIA within the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS).

As a member of Friends of the NIA (FoNIA)—a broad-based coalition of aging, disease, research, and patient groups committed to the advancement of medical research that affects millions of older Americans—**the AGS urges you to include \$51.303 billion in the FY 2025 budget for total spending at NIH for current institutes and operations. We strongly recommend ensuring that any funding for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) supplement, not supplant, the total \$51.303 billion base budget recommendation. The AGS also supports a minimum increase of \$318 million for research on Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias over the enacted FY 2024 level.**

The AGS believes that sustained and enhanced federal investments in aging research are essential to delivering high-quality, coordinated, and efficient care to older adults, whose numbers across the U.S. are projected to increase dramatically in the coming years. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people age 65 and older is projected to climb from 63.4 million today to more than 94.7 million by 2060, while those 85 and older is projected to more than double from 7.3 million today to 19

million by 2060.<sup>1</sup> As our aging population increases, so too will the prevalence of diseases disproportionately affecting older people—most notably Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (including vascular, Lewy body, and frontotemporal dementia)—and the economic burden associated with these diseases. By 2060, for example, the number of people affected by dementia is estimated to reach 13.85 million cases,<sup>2</sup> approximately double the estimated 6.9 million in 2024.<sup>3</sup> Chronic diseases related to aging, such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer continue to afflict 80 percent of people 65 and older.<sup>4</sup> Further, nearly 45 percent of Medicare beneficiaries have four or more chronic conditions<sup>5</sup> and account for more than 75 percent of Medicare expenditures.<sup>6</sup>

As we know you appreciate, the NIA sponsors and conducts most federal aging-related research and applies scientific advancements to enhance the health, safety, and independence of older adults. The NIA also prioritizes translating research into more efficient care by developing effective interventions for the prevention, early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of disease that are disseminated to health care providers, patients, and their caregivers. These interventions will help reduce declines in function and susceptibility to disease or frailty. The NIH has expanded dementia research initiatives and resources including platforms for data sharing and interdisciplinary collaborations, new research models and methodologies, and policies to ensure clinical trials reflect the diversity of the nation’s population. In FY 2025, the NIA plans to advance research to improve the detection and diagnosis, treatment, and care of those living with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias by exploring the factors on dementia risk and resilience, improving the understanding of genetics and other disease mechanisms, enhancing digital health and biomarker technologies, identifying and developing effective therapeutics, advancing comprehensive models of care, and strengthening data and resource sharing for the research community.<sup>7</sup> The ongoing federal commitment to investments in science, research, and technology leads to cutting-edge discoveries in medicine, improved patient care, and reduced costs. Breakthroughs from NIH and NIA research can not only delay the onset of costly age-related diseases but also can save trillions of dollars by the middle of the current century. The AGS urges Congress to strengthen its commitment in FY 2025 so that we may advance medicine to improve care quality and fully achieve the goals of delivery system reform.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau International Programs Center. International Database (IDB). Accessed May 1, 2024.

[https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/#/pop?COUNTRY\\_YEAR=2023&COUNTRY\\_YR\\_ANIM=2023&FIPS\\_SINGLE=US&FIPS=US&popPages=BYAGE&POP\\_YEARS=2024,2060&menu=popViz&ageGroup=O&CCODE=US&CCODE\\_SINGLE=US](https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/idb/#/pop?COUNTRY_YEAR=2023&COUNTRY_YR_ANIM=2023&FIPS_SINGLE=US&FIPS=US&popPages=BYAGE&POP_YEARS=2024,2060&menu=popViz&ageGroup=O&CCODE=US&CCODE_SINGLE=US)

<sup>2</sup> Rajan KB, Weuve J, Barnes LL, McAninch EA, Wilson RS, Evans DA. Population estimate of people with clinical AD and mild cognitive impairment in the United States (2020-2060). *Alzheimers Dement.* 2021;17(12):1966-1975. doi:[10.1002/alz.12362](https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.12362)

<sup>3</sup> Alzheimer’s Association. 2024 Alzheimer’s Disease Facts and Figures. *Alzheimers Dement.* 2024;20(5):1-98. doi:[10.1002/alz.13809](https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.13809)

<sup>4</sup> National Prevention Council. Healthy Aging in Action: Advancing the National Prevention Strategy. Published November 2016. Accessed May 1, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/healthy-aging-in-action508.pdf>. (Page 11)

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey 2018 Chartbook. Published December 8, 2020. Accessed May 1, 2024. <https://www.cms.gov/files/zip/2018-medicare-current-beneficiary-survey-annual-chartbook-and-slides.zip>

<sup>6</sup> Aspen Health Strategy Group. Reducing the Burden of Chronic Disease: A Report of the Aspen Health Strategy Group. Published 2019. Accessed May 1, 2024. <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/AHSG-Chronic-Disease-Report-2019.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> National Institutes of Health. NIH Professional Judgment Budget for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias Research, Fiscal Year 2025. Published July 2023. Accessed May 7, 2024. [https://www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/fy25\\_alzheimers\\_bypassbudget.pdf](https://www.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2023-07/fy25_alzheimers_bypassbudget.pdf)

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request. If you have comments or questions about NIH funding or other issues related to the healthy aging of older Americans, please contact Anna Kim, Senior Manager of Public Affairs & Advocacy, at 212-308-1414 or [akim@americangeriatrics.org](mailto:akim@americangeriatrics.org).

Sincerely,



Donna M. Fick, PhD, GCNS-BC, AGSF, FGSA, FAAN  
Board Chair



Nancy E. Lundebjerg, MPA  
Chief Executive Officer

June 5, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, and Education

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<sup>2</sup> Rajan KB, Weuve J, Barnes LL, McAninch EA, Wilson RS, Evans DA. Population estimate of people with clinical AD and mild cognitive impairment in the United States (2020-2060). *Alzheimers Dement.* 2021;17(12):1966-1975. doi:[10.1002/alz.12362](https://doi.org/10.1002/alz.12362)

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<sup>5</sup> Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey 2018 Chartbook. Published December 8, 2020. Accessed May 1, 2024. <https://www.cms.gov/files/zip/2018-medicare-current-beneficiary-survey-annual-chartbook-and-slides.zip>

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Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Donna M. Fick in black ink.

Donna M. Fick, PhD, GCNS-BC, AGSF, FGSA, FAAN  
Board Chair

Handwritten signature of Nancy E. Lundebjerg in black ink.

Nancy E. Lundebjerg, MPA  
Chief Executive Officer