



We, the undersigned, are writing to highlight the brain tumor community's unyielding support of robust funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) in the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) budget.

The brain tumor community is diverse, with close to 700,000 American men, women and children of all races, nationalities, and all socio-economic backgrounds currently living with one of the at least 130 distinct types of brain tumors. Thousands more will become brain tumor patients due to other cancers metastasizing to the brain. Yet, there are very few treatment options, no cure, and survival rates for these tumors have not significantly improved in decades. For the most vulnerable, pediatric brain tumor patients, there has never been a single drug developed specifically to fight this disease.

Brain tumors are tragically now the leading cause of cancer death in all children and adolescents 19 years of age or younger, surpassing leukemia and now accounting for three-out-of-every-10 cancer deaths in our nation's kids. Some of the most common, as well as aggressive, brain tumors in both children and adults leave most patients with one year or less of average survival time. And while some will, fortunately, live fuller lives, virtually all with malignant tumors will continue to live MRI scan to MRI scan, hoping that their brain tumor will not return or re-grow. Many of those survivors will likely need ongoing medical treatments to contend with the often life-altering physical and/or cognitive deficits that current harsh treatments inflict on fragile brain tumor patients in order to live the best life they can as parents, children, friends, classmates, co-workers, and community members.

Thus, one thing is clear: more research matters. Research holds the key to changing the trajectory of this family of diseases. Only research will allow us to ultimately substitute "cure" for "cancer" as the "c" word.

Over the past decade, more progress has been made to understand brain tumors than in the previous two hundred years. Thanks to federal investment in the NIH, brain tumors were the first tumor genomically sequenced through The Cancer Genome Atlas project. That investment is just beginning to pay off by helping usher in a new era of NIH-funded research - as well as privately- and philanthropically-funded research that builds off NIH grants - and FDA-reviewed clinical trials that harness this new knowledge to create opportunities for new, effective medicines and therapeutic approaches.

The proposed cuts to the NIH would impact our individual and collective efforts to cure brain tumors in two major ways. First, the cuts would likely greatly reduce the number of grants provided to established brain tumor researchers, labs, and projects, slowing the pace that discoveries could turn into successful clinical trials. Second, the cuts are an immediate disincentive to early career or aspiring researchers who may have breakthrough ideas that can only be realized if they have access to NIH grants. This comes at a time when there has never been more talent in the research community.

The NIH and NCI are key sources of American pride and productivity all in the pursuit of helping us live full and healthy lives. We urge you to appropriate \$41.6 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and \$6.522 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI) for Fiscal Year 2020.

The brain tumor community is watching and is encouraging you to show us that you care.

Signed by 4,146 brain tumor advocates from all 50 states plus Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, and sent to Members of Congress and the White House.