



Durbin: NIH at the heart of research that improves American lives

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WASHINGTON - At a hearing of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) highlighted the critical role of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in conducting the important medical research that leads to new cures and treatments for disease and conditions impacting families worldwide. In response to the drastic cuts to medical research, as proposed in President Trump's FY2018 budget, Durbin announced that he will introduce legislation to increase recognition and awareness of the agency's lifesaving work.

“I think it’s time the American people came to hear the National Institutes of Health being referred to on a regular basis as part of the sourcing of the great things that are happening,” Durbin told NIH Director Francis Collins. **“I’d like to ask the Chairman and others to think about joining me in a bipartisan effort to make sure that credit is given where it’s due, so that Americans begin to appreciate how you’re at the heart of basic research that really makes their lives an awful lot better.”**

Video of Durbin’s remarks to the Labor HHS Subcommittee is available [here](#).

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President Trump’s FY2018 budget proposes cutting \$7.2 billion from the NIH, which would bring NIH funding to its lowest level since 2002. This drastic decrease would impact the agency’s research on Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, mental illness, and infectious diseases like Zika and Ebola. Durbin has strongly criticized those cuts, saying on a recent trip to the NIH campus in Maryland:

“Cutting the NIH’s budget by \$7 billion, as this Administration has proposed, would cripple American innovation in medical research and delay new cures and treatments. Cuts to medical research would be a mistake that would be felt for generations to come.”

For the past two years, Congress has provided the NIH with \$2 billion per year in funding increases.

In March, Senator Durbin reintroduced the *American Cures Act*, which would increase funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Defense Health Program (DHP), and the Veterans Medical & Prosthetics Research Program.