



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

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Augusta, GA

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