

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Supports legislation to increase funding for biomedical research

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CONTACT: press@baldwin.senate.gov
(202) 224 - 6225

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin, a member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, announced her support as an original cosponsor of legislation that would increase funding for biomedical research.

The *National Biomedical Research Act*, introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), would increase funding for targeted biomedical research initiatives through a new, reliable funding stream supporting the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The purchasing power of the NIH has been cut by Congress for more than a decade. This funding boost would help restore the NIH budget roughly to its 2006 levels, adjusted for biomedical inflation.

“As the granddaughter of an NIH-funded scientist, I have long championed strengthening our research enterprise. That’s why I’ve introduced legislation to improve opportunities for young researchers, and that’s why I’m cosponsoring the *National Biomedical Research Act* to ensure stronger investments in biomedical research,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “Now more than ever, we must protect and strengthen our investments in research, science and innovation. I’m proud to join Senator Warren in this effort, and I look forward to supporting this legislation in committee.”

During a recent HELP committee hearing, NIH Director Francis Collins confirmed

that currently, NIH only funds about 19 percent of the grant applications submitted by research scientists, including many high-quality applications that would advance biomedical science. “If we look back in history, say back around 2000, 2001, we were funding about 30 percent, maybe even 35 percent because funds were more available,” **said Director Collins.**

The *National Biomedical Research Act* would create the Biomedical Innovation Fund, a new fund designed specifically to provide predictable investments in life-saving biomedical research conducted by leading scientists at the nation’s top research institutions.

The funding would provide \$5 billion annually in supplemental funding for grants for young emerging scientists, and breakthrough research that will help accelerate the development and approval of new medicines, improve prevention, and increase understanding of life-threatening diseases.

Right now, NIH rejects nearly nine of eleven grant proposals, one of the highest rejection rates in history and far below the 1/3 success rate called for by agency leaders, because of a lack of resources. Predictability of funding for biomedical research will create stability for researchers and accelerate the pace of scientific advancements.

The legislation has received support from more than two dozen patient and research advocacy groups. In addition, the following Senators are original cosponsors of the legislation: Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Bob Casey (D-PA), Al Franken (D-MN), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Edward J. Markey (D-MA), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Mazie K. Hirono (D-HI), Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Kamala Harris (D-CA)

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