

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
NEUROLOGICAL SURGEONS

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President
FRÉDERICK A. BOOP, MD
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President
ALAN M. SCARROW, MD
Springfield, Missouri

January 11, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chair
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and
Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

SUBJECT: Funding for Brain Aneurysm Research

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), Congress of Neurological Surgeons (CNS) and the AANS/CNS Joint Cerebrovascular Section, we would like to thank you for your ongoing bipartisan support of medical research funding — particularly your most recent efforts in passing the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255). Strongly supported by our organizations, this legislation included, among other things, funding for the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies® (BRAIN) Initiative. We are excited about the significant promise this law holds; however, there is still more to do.

To that end, we are writing today to express our strong support for increased funding for research dedicated to brain aneurysms. As neurosurgeons, we, unfortunately, witness the devastating effects of this very serious illness. As you consider appropriations for fiscal year 2018, we urge you to provide sufficient funds devoted to brain aneurysm research, specifically those projects focused on prevention, detection, treatment and rehabilitation.

An estimated six million people in the United States, or one in 50 people, have an unruptured brain aneurysm. Each year, an estimated 30,000 individuals in the U.S. suffer a ruptured brain aneurysm, 40 percent of which are fatal. Approximately 15 percent of patients with aneurysmal subarachnoid hemorrhage (SAH) die before reaching the hospital. Most of the deaths from subarachnoid hemorrhage are due to rapid and massive brain injury from the initial bleeding, which is not correctable by medical and surgical interventions. Of those who survive, about 66 percent suffer some permanent neurological deficit. Women, more than men, suffer from brain aneurysms, and both African-Americans and Hispanics experience ruptured aneurysms at twice the rate of whites. Finally, the cost associated with brain aneurysms is high. For example, the combined lost wages of survivors of brain aneurysm ruptures and their caretakers is estimated to be \$138 million per year.

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Nevertheless, despite its widespread prevalence and high costs, the federal government spends less than one dollar per year on brain aneurysm research for each person afflicted. Organized neurosurgery is, therefore, very concerned about the current lack of federal funding devoted to this disease. New and exciting medical technologies and techniques are enhancing neurosurgeons' ability to treat this devastating condition. With enhanced support, additional breakthroughs can be achieved, saving thousands of lives each year.

On behalf of the AANS and CNS, we respectfully urge you to provide sufficient funding in the FY 2018 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill for brain aneurysm-related initiatives. We look forward to working with you on this important initiative and if you have any questions or need additional information, please contact us.

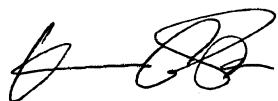
Sincerely,



Frederick A. Boop, MD, President
American Association of Neurological Surgeons



Alan M. Scarrow, MD, President
Congress of Neurological Surgeons



Kevin M. Cockroft, MD, MSc, Chair
AANS/CNS Joint Cerebrovascular Section

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