

FRIENDS OF ORWH

*NIH Office of Research
on Women's Health*

November 11, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Collins, and Vice Chair Murray:

As you continue work to finalize the continuing resolution, restore government funding, and prepare to enter negotiations on final fiscal year (FY) 2026 spending legislation, the 16 undersigned organizations, representing members of the Friends of the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) urge you to ensure that biomedical research – and women's health research in particular – is prioritized. While reopening the government would be a welcome development, continuing resolutions still create uncertainty, disrupt research progress, and delay critical grant funding cycles. We cannot afford to compromise federal programs that advance biomedical research and safeguard the health of all Americans – to prevent lasting harm to the scientific community, the public health infrastructure, and the millions of Americans who benefit from discoveries supported by the NIH and other federal agencies.

The Friends of ORWH is a coalition of more than 50 organizations representing researchers, clinicians, patients, and policy advocates that are committed to elevating the mission of ORWH to address biological sex differences in health and prioritize research gaps to advance women's health. Through our collective expertise and experience, we know that government shutdowns interrupt biomedical discovery. Within the last six weeks alone, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has been forced to freeze grant disbursements, delay peer review and advisory council meetings, delay the start of clinical trials, and furlough federal research staff – actions that disrupt the progress of ongoing

studies and jeopardize future breakthroughs. The continuity of basic and clinical research is especially vulnerable, and the long-term effects of these disruptions can be profound.

Women's health research has been put particularly at risk during this shutdown. Much of this work is longitudinal in nature, requiring stable and consistent federal support. Interruptions in funding or staffing can undermine data integrity and derail years of ongoing research. Ensuring robust and continuous funding for ORWH is essential to protecting these initiatives and advancing improvements to clinical discoveries and the health care it informs.

As you work in a bipartisan manner to finalize funding after the January 30 deadline, the Friends urge you to support the Senate Appropriations Committee's proposed funding levels of **\$48.7 billion for the NIH** and **\$106.5 million for the ORWH**.

While we recognize the challenges of the current fiscal environment and the many competing priorities before you, it is necessary to highlight that NIH funding has not kept pace with inflation in recent years. Meaningful increases are essential to ensure that the NIH and ORWH can continue to fulfill the mission and tasks Congress has empowered them to do through previous appropriations cycles and to ensure that the United States continues to be a global leader in biomedical discovery. The lack of funding for biomedical research on women's health not only undermines scientific progress but also costs lives – not just today, but for generations to come. When women's unique biology and health needs are overlooked, it leads to misdiagnosis, ineffective treatments, and preventable deaths, threatening both the integrity of research and the health of mothers, daughters, wives, partners, and sisters everywhere. For these reasons, investments in the NIH and ORWH are critical to sustaining momentum in innovation and ensuring continuity in lifesaving research.

In consideration of the above, we urge you to work swiftly to finalize FY 2026 spending legislation and ensure that biomedical research receives the sustained, timely, and adequate federal support it urgently requires. While continuing resolutions are an alternative to full government shutdowns, they perpetuate funding uncertainty and compromise ongoing medical research, and we urge you to prioritize passing a full year spending bill.

The Friends of ORWH looks forward to working with you to ensure sufficient and necessary support for federal medical research agencies in FY 2026. The transformative impact of NIH investment is especially evident in women's health research, where new insights and treatments continue to improve lives across the country – one of the most beneficial and

cost-effective investments our government can make for the health and well-being of the nation.

Please reach out to SWHR Chief Advocacy Officer Lindsey Miltenberger at lindsey@swhr.org with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Aging Research

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)

American Medical Women's Association

American Physiological Society

Black Women's Health Imperative

Center for Endometriosis Care

Endocrine Society

Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research

HealthyWomen

Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA)

National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health

Preeclampsia Foundation

Small World Initiative

Society for Women's Health Research

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease