



AAAAI sees significant successes in Senate Appropriations bills

September 18, 2019

Last week, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed the Department of Defense fiscal year (FY) 2020 Appropriations Bill with "Food Allergies" added to the list of conditions eligible to be studied by the \$350 million DoD Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program.

Earlier this week, the Senate Appropriations Committee released the report language for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriation bill for 2020, and it included a significant number of items the AAAAI has actively supported. We are pleased to share with you the following key items included in the subcommittee [report language](#):

Food Allergies. The Committee recognizes the serious issue of food allergies, which affect approximately 8% of children and 10% of adults in the United States. The Committee commends the ongoing work of NIAID in supporting approximately 17 clinical sites for this critical research, including seven sites as part of the Consortium of Food Allergy Research (CoFAR). The Committee urges NIH to support robust investment to expand its clinical research network to add new centers of excellence in food allergy clinical care and to select such centers from those with a proven expertise in food allergy research. *The AAAAI has actively championed ongoing and increased support for CoFAR, including a Congressional briefing highlighting food allergy research and discussing the issue individually with key leaders in Congress in May, 2019.*

Asthma. The Committee includes \$30,000,000, an increase of \$1,000,000. The Committee supports the work of the National Asthma Control Program, recognizing that asthma is one of the most common and costly health conditions in the United States. The Committee encourages CDC to continue its efforts which promote evidence-based asthma medical management and strategies aimed at improving access and adherence to the 2007 National Asthma Education and Prevention Program. *The AAAAI has consistently supported the National Asthma Control Program through nominating and facilitating individual expert engagement, Congressional outreach, and other strategies.*

Primary Immunodeficiencies. The Office of Public Health Genomics should continue education and awareness related to primary immunodeficiencies. This program has proven effective in identifying undiagnosed patients and linking them to centers of care. *The AAAAI supports coalition efforts to increase research and improve access to care for patients with primary immunodeficiency diseases.*

Penicillin Allergy. To complement ongoing efforts to combat antimicrobial resistance, the Committee encourages HHS to educate the public and healthcare providers regarding the importance of penicillin allergy testing. *It is a priority advocacy effort of the AAAAI, on our own and in coalitions, to advance testing of patient-reported penicillin allergy as a means of antibiotic stewardship and in the fight against antimicrobial resistance. We are extremely pleased to see report language addressing the issue directly, an effort launched during our visits on Capitol Hill in May and vigorously pursued with the Senate Appropriations Committee since then.*

Following are additional provisions the AAAAI has actively supported through our work with a coalition focused on antimicrobial resistance:

Antimicrobial Resistance [AMR]—The Committee is pleased with CDC’s AMR Challenge and implementing a One Health approach to encourage governments, private industries, and non-governmental organizations worldwide to combat AMR. The Committee encourages CDC to build off of its findings and experiences from the AMR Challenge as it winds down the effort later this year. The Committee requests an update on these activities in the fiscal year 2021. Further, a multitude of pathogens identified in CDC’s AR Threats Report have been traditionally associated with infections in healthcare settings, but are now being identified as causes of infections in the community. The Committee includes a \$500,000 increase and directs CDC to use their broad agency agreement to fund an innovative project that uses population-based research to define risk factors for these pathogens in community settings.

Combating Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria [CARB]—The Committee continues to support the CARB initiative and provides \$168,500,000. The Committee recognizes the importance of addressing antibiotic-resistant bacteria through a “One Health” approach, simultaneously combating antibiotic resistance in human, animal, and environmental settings. The Committee encourages CDC to support funding for collaborations between entities such as academic medical centers, veterinary schools, schools of public health, State public health departments, and other academic institutions whose proposals are in line with CDC’s strategy for addressing antibiotic resistant bacteria.

Reporting Antibiotic Use and Resistance—CDC, in conjunction with CMS and ONC, should identify and utilize existing policy authorities and resources to increase the number of hospitals and other healthcare facilities reporting antibiotic use and resistance data to CDC. CDC is encouraged to report to Congress in the fiscal year 2021 on this effort as well as any additional authorities or resources needed to meet the National Action Plan goal for 95 percent of hospitals reporting.

Antimicrobial Resistance [AMR]—The Committee recommendation includes \$600,000,000 within NIAID for research related to combating AMR, an increase of \$50,000,000. The Committee remains deeply troubled by the growing threat posed by antimicrobial resistant pathogens. In April, the United Nations issued a report that, like the 2016 review sponsored by the government of the United Kingdom and Wellcome Trust, warned that rampant over- use of antibiotics and antifungal medicines in humans, livestock, and agriculture could erase much of the improvement in public health achieved since the development of the first antimicrobials in the 1940s. The Committee recommendation includes \$1,700,000 to fund a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine study to examine and quantify the long-term medical and economic impacts of increasing AMR in the United States. The review should examine progress made on the U.S. National Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria including domestic and international strategies employed by NIH, CDC, FDA, ASPR, USDA, and USAID. The National Academies’ report should make recommendations to address any gaps in research and development of therapeutics and diagnostics; efforts to move new products to market; animal and human surveillance, prevention efforts, international coordination and collaboration; and any other recommendations the Academies finds relevant to stopping the spread of AMR. The Committee directs NIAID to report on trends in AMR- related Research Project Grants, including the success rates for such grants, and requests an update on these activities in the fiscal year 2021, including an overall assessment of the progress to date of efforts to address AMR.

Research in Pregnant and Lactating Women. The Task Force on Research in Pregnant Women and Lactating Women (PRGLAC) issued a report to the Secretary of HHS outlining 15 recommendations to facilitate the inclusion of pregnant and lactating women in clinical research. The Committee commends the Secretary for extending the Task Force and believes this extension should be for at least an additional 2 years to continue to work towards healthcare professionals and consumers having accurate information on the safety and efficacy of drugs taken by these populations. NICHD should oversee its part of the implementation of the already released recommendations working with other relevant Institutes, CDC, and FDA. The Committee requests a progress report be provided in fiscal year 2021. *Through its support of the Vaccines and Medications in Pregnancy Surveillance System (VAMPSS), the AAAAI has engaged with the PRGLAC, and directly supported this effort as a member of the Coalition to Advance Maternal Therapeutics.*

The AAAAI sincerely appreciates the efforts of Advocacy Committee members and leaders, and others, who participated in congressional visits and targeted individual outreach to help achieve these important gains for the Allergy/Immunology specialty.