

Date

The Honorable  
United States Senate  
SH-503  
2<sup>nd</sup> and C Streets N.E.  
Washington, DC 20510

Attn:

Re: Support for Increased Pain Research Funding

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We are writing to urge your strong support for increased pain research funding at the National Institutes of Health. The 2011 IOM report and the recent National Pain Strategy document the pain epidemic in the United States. Problems include:

- **100 million adults** suffer from chronic pain--more than those afflicted with heart disease, diabetes and cancer combined;
- annual costs to the economy between **\$560-635 billion**; and
- annual costs to federal programs over **\$100 billion**.

Yet research efforts in the field are nowhere near commensurate with the scope of the problem. The NIH only spends about 1% of its annual budget on pain despite promising initiatives that require funding for implementation. The Interagency Pain Research Coordinating Committee (IPRCC), commissioned by Congress as part of the ACA, has identified priority areas of new pain relief research. That effort will need to be followed by funding commitments if the promise of its work to reduce the nation's burden of pain is to be realized.

In addition to improving care of persons with pain, better understanding of pain and its treatment will reduce reliance on opioid medications for pain treatment, in turn reducing availability of opioids for diversion, non-medical use, and associated harm.

Important pain research is ongoing at many institutions across the US. We would like to inform you and your staff on our own efforts, and how they relate to the broader problem of inadequate funding at the national level.

We therefore advocate for you to firmly support an increase in funding for pain research at the NIH.

Respectfully submitted,