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Majority of Americans Want Congress to Increase Medical Research Funding; Oppose President's Proposed NIH Budget Cuts

Ninety Percent of Voters Say Funding Medical Research is "Very" or "Extremely" Important

Washington, D.C., May 22, 2017—A new nationwide poll released today shows an overwhelming 90 percent of voters believe federal funding for medical research, including cancer research, is “very” or “extremely” important. Seventy-five percent of those surveyed say they want Congress to significantly increase federal funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and more than two-thirds say they oppose significant NIH funding cuts included in the president’s FY 2018 budget.

The poll also found 73 percent of voters oppose cutting medical research funding to pay for a proposed border wall and 89 percent want Congress to maintain or increase current funding for cancer prevention programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A statement from One Voice Against Cancer (OVAC) follows:

“Voters clearly understand the importance of continued investment in life-saving medical research and prevention. They want their elected officials to increase, not cut, NIH funding and prioritize our nation’s ongoing investment in cutting-edge cancer research.

“During the last few years Congress has demonstrated a strong, bipartisan commitment to spurring new innovations in prevention, detection and treatments for disease like cancer through the National Cancer Moonshot Initiative, the 21st Century Cures Act and the \$2 billion NIH funding increase included in the final 2017 omnibus appropriations bill. Now is the time to capitalize and build on those investments rather than risk undoing progress through ill-conceived budget cuts.

“Moreover, voters want to preserve or increase funding for CDC cancer prevention and early detection efforts, including providing access to breast, cervical and colon cancer screenings and prostate cancer education programs to those who might otherwise be unable to access such services.

“As Congress considers priorities in the FY 2018 budget, the cancer community urges them to consider voters’ overwhelming support for cancer research funding and the promise it gives the more than 1.7 million Americans expected to be diagnosed with cancer this year.

“Congress should reject any proposed cuts to the NIH budget and, instead, continue the year-over-year funding increases necessary to drive the development of improved treatments that will lead to better outcomes from this devastating disease.”

The poll of 1,200 likely voters was conducted by GS Strategy Group May 9-11, 2017. Questions on potential funding cuts were based on the president’s “skinny budget” released in March.

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