April 13, 2010

The Honorable Kent Conrad  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Judd Gregg  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John M. Spratt, Jr.  
Chairman  
Committee on the Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Budget  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Conrad and Spratt and Ranking Members Gregg and Ryan:

We, the undersigned governors, thank you for your past support for biomedical research and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and ask you to craft a budget resolution that accommodates the President's $32.2 billion FY 2011 NIH budget request.

The greatest contribution NIH makes is to the health and well-being of Americans. Past federal investments in medical research, combined with those from the private sector, have led to improved health, better quality of life, and improved productivity for millions of patients and their families.

But NIH is also an important national, regional, and local economic engine. Together, our states received more than $19 billion from the NIH last year for promising research efforts. NIH funding directly supports 350,000 jobs across the U.S. In our states, we see firsthand the world class research institutions and scientific teams enabled by NIH, as well as the indirect job benefits of laboratories needing space, supplies, services, and equipment. We are also deeply aware that NIH-funded discoveries are the basis of new companies and even new industries in our communities.

NIH research is an instrumental part of the success of the U.S. life sciences industry and its 6 million high wage U.S. jobs. Moreover, follow-on life science research advances are now stimulating new jobs and new solutions in green energy, agriculture, the environment and industrial manufacturing. NIH funding enables the scientific talent and discoveries that are at the heart of this vast array of economic activity.
As you develop the Congressional Budget Resolution, we urge you to enable the 3.2% funding increase for NIH contained in the President's budget request.

With warm regards,

Governor Jim Doyle
Wisconsin

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
California

Governor Bob Riley
Alabama

Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.
Colorado

Governor M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut

Governor Jack Markell
Delaware

Governor Pat Quinn
Illinois

Governor Chester J. Culver
Iowa

Governor Mark Parkinson
Kansas

Governor Steven L. Beshear
Kentucky

Governor Martin O'Malley
Maryland

Governor Deval Patrick
Massachusetts

Governor Chris Christie
New Jersey

Governor David A. Paterson
New York
Governor Bev Perdue
North Carolina

Governor Ted Strickland
Ohio

Governor Brad Henry
Oklahoma

Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski
Oregon

Governor Edward G. Rendell
Pennsylvania

Governor M. Michael Rounds
South Dakota

Governor Phil Bredesen
Tennessee

Governor James H. Douglas
Vermont

Governor Christine O. Gregoire
Washington

Governor Joe Manchin III
West Virginia

Governor Dave Freudenthal
Wyoming

cc: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
    Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
    Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi
    House Minority Leader John Boehner
    Senator Daniel Inouye
    Senator Thad Cochran
    Senator Tom Harkin
    Congressman David Obey
    Congressman Jerry Lewis
    Congressman Todd Tiahrt