Statement of Juliane Baron, Executive Director  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences

FY 2025 Appropriations for the National Institutes of Health, Advanced Research Projects Agency in Health, and the Institute of Education Sciences submitted for the record to the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

Honorable Tammy Baldwin, Chair and

Honorable Shelley Moore Capito, Ranking Member

May 24, 2024

Chairwoman Baldwin, Ranking Member Capito, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) is grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony for the record in support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Advanced Research Projects Agency in Health (ARPA-H) and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). FABBS represents twenty-nine scientific societies and almost sixty university departments whose members and faculty share a commitment to advancing knowledge of the mind, brain, and behavior. For fiscal year 2025 (FY25), FABBS requests $51.3 billion for NIH, aligned with the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research’s recommendation. FABBS also seeks $1.7 billion for ARPA-H and at least $900 million for IES, both requests are consistent with the scientific stakeholder communities.

National Institutes of Health

FABBS members contribute to the NIH mission of seeking fundamental knowledge about the behavior of living systems and applying that knowledge to enhance health, lengthen life, and prevent and reduce illness and disability. As a member of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research and the Coalition for Health Funding, FABBS recommends at least $51.3 billion for NIH in FY25 and urges that any funding for other targeted programs supplement the base budget, rather than supplant the essential foundational investment in the NIH. Sustained funding to NIH is critical for the behavioral and brain sciences and for the health of our country.

Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR)

In this testimony, FABBS underscores the effective and efficient role of OBSSR to provide essential support across NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs). OBSSR coordinates and promotes basic, clinical, and translational behavioral and social science research at NIH and plays a crucial role in enhancing trans-NIH investments in longitudinal datasets, technology in support of behavior change, innovative research methodologies, and promoting the inclusion of behavioral science in initiatives in partnership with ICs. OBSSR co-funds highly rated grants that ICs
cannot fund alone and leverage investments across the NIH to broadly improve the quality and impact of federally funded research.

**National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

FABBS members are particularly interested in NIMH, the premier federal agency responsible for transforming the understanding of mental health and the treatment of mental illnesses through basic biomedical, behavioral, and clinical research, to best inform prevention, early intervention, recovery, and cures. As a founding co-chair of the Friends of NIMH, FABBS appreciates the bipartisan interest in and commitment to mental health research and recommends increasing the NIMH budget in a way that is commensurate with any increases to NIH overall.

**Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)**

As a member of the Friends of NICHD executive committee, FABBS recommends increasing funding to NICHD in FY25 in a way that is commensurate with any increase to the overall NIH budget. NICHD has facilitated significant advances in brain and behavioral research with far-reaching implications for public health, maternal, child, and family health, and learning and language development. NICHD needs additional funding for behavioral research on child developmental trajectories across infancy, childhood, and adolescence, in both at-risk and normative environments, across diverse contexts and including underrepresented and vulnerable groups.

**Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative**

The BRAIN Initiative is a partnership between Federal and non-Federal partners with a common goal of accelerating the development of innovative neurotechnologies. Research supported by the BRAIN Initiative holds tremendous promise for our understanding of the brain. FABBS encourages continued investment in the Initiative to achieve better treatments, prevention, and cures of brain diseases and conditions that impact an estimated one in three Americans. Unfortunately, in FY24, the final budget cut $278 million from the Initiative.

**Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)**

FABBS is pleased to see the progress at ARPA-H over these past two years and encourages the Subcommittee to allocate at least $1.7 billion to the agency in FY25. ARPA-H complements NIH’s pivotal role with a focus on end product-driven R&D, with a public-private approach, and collaboration across scientific disciplines. Growing the agency’s budget will enable ARPA-H to greatly reduce deadly and debilitating health threats that compromise the health and wellbeing of the American people. FABBS is actively engaged with ARPA-H to contribute insights from the implementation sciences to achieve the best possible health outcomes for all.
Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education

IES is an independent, nonpartisan branch of the U.S. Department of Education charged with providing information on the condition and progress of education, educational practices that support learning and improve academic achievement, and the effectiveness of federal and other education programs. As members of the Friends of IES, FABBS encourages the Subcommittee to appropriate at least $900 million to IES in FY25. This funding level will allow the Institute to maximize its capacity to advance innovative research, develop the methodological skills of education researchers, and continue to support high-quality and trustworthy statistics and evidence-based resources.

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) recommendations for the future of education research provide an inspiring path forward for the agency, outlining education policy and practice to make critical progress in learning outcomes for all students. However, the report finds that “Given the breadth of what IES is expected to accomplish as mandated in ESRA [the Education Sciences Reform Act], its funding for both programmatic activities and staffing has historically been limited in comparison to other federal science, research, and statistical agencies with similar objectives [and] in order to achieve the overarching vision presented through these recommendations, IES will require additional investments.”

Thank you for considering this testimony.

FABBS Member Societies: