

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

**FY 2027 Appropriations for the National Institutes of Health, Advanced Research Projects
Agency for Health, and the Institute of Education Sciences**

**Submitted for the Record to the United States House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies**

**Honorable Robert Aderholt, Chairman
Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member**

April 16, 2026

Chairman Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, 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), the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H), and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). FABBS represents thirty-four scientific societies and nearly sixty university departments committed to advancing knowledge of the mind, brain, and behavior. For fiscal year 2027 (FY27), FABBS requests at least **\$51.3 billion for NIH**, aligned with the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research's recommendation. FABBS also seeks **\$1.70 billion for ARPA-H**, and **at least \$900 million for IES**, also consistent with recommendations from the stakeholder communities.

FABBS submits this testimony recognizing the ongoing disruptions to the critical work of NIH and IES. FABBS implores you, as the leaders and architects who have helped to build and shape these organizations throughout your careers, to continue to serve the missions of these agencies. We submit these recommendations based on the science necessary to support health and educational outcomes for all Americans.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Aligning with the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, FABBS advocates for robust funding for NIH to advance biomedical and behavioral research that enhances health outcomes. Strong investment in NIH makes Americans healthier. Patients across all communities benefit from NIH-supported medical research, which serves as the foundation for nearly every preventive intervention, diagnostic tool, treatment, and cure in practice today. Researchers in this country conduct vital studies on innovative strategies to promote patient well-being and tackle a wide range of health challenges, including cancer, Alzheimer's disease, mental health disorders, and chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. In addition, robust investment in NIH

benefits Americans in myriad other ways: It stimulates local and state economies, spurs new industries and creates new jobs, and strengthens U.S. global competitiveness.

As we saw in FY25, disruptions to NIH-supported research have devastating impacts on patients and communities. Even now, the agency is struggling to spend its FY26 appropriations, with data indicating that, halfway through the fiscal year, NIH had obligated only about 15 percent of its extramural budget. FABBS and our fellow stakeholders share concerns that the agency may be at risk of not spending all of its appropriations by the end of September. Delays at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in approving funding opportunities, a dearth of permanent institute and center (IC) directors, and underpopulated Advisory Councils have all contributed to the slowdown in grantmaking. We therefore urge Congress to increase its oversight of the agency by hearing from IC leadership in addition to the director, enforcing critical report language included in the FY26 LHHS bill, and ensuring that NIH will obligate its appropriations as directed.

Behavioral and brain sciences are essential in addressing emerging health threats and long-term outcomes, and are relevant across all of the NIH ICs. Below, we present a few examples of institutes and programs in which behavioral and brain sciences play critical roles.

Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR)

FABBS would like to underscore the essential role of OBSSR in supporting behavioral and social science research across NIH institutes and centers. OBSSR coordinates and promotes basic, clinical, and translational research to address behavioral challenges that impact public health, such as chronic disease prevention and health behavior change. For example, behavioral interventions have shown significant economic benefits, reducing healthcare costs by preventing diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular conditions.

Furthermore, federal investments in behavioral and social science research generate significant returns on tax payer dollars. Research not only improves patient outcomes but also enhances U.S. global competitiveness, promotes national security, and spurs economic growth. These investments establish viable career paths for the next generation of scientists and create high-quality jobs in communities nationwide.

We recommend no less than the FY26 funding level for OBSSR, including a proportionate increase in its FY27 budget as provided to the NIH.

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

As a founding co-chair of the Friends of NIMH executive committee, we request robust funding to advance mental health research and improve health outcomes. NIMH is crucial for developing effective interventions to treat mental health disorders, preventing suicide, and addressing

psychiatric conditions that affect millions of Americans. Funding mental health research not only helps improve the quality of life for individuals but also provides significant cost savings in the form of reduced long-term care, healthcare expenses, and lost productivity.

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

As a member of the Friends of NICHD executive committee, we support strong continued funding for research at NICHD that advances child development, learning, and family health. Studies sponsored by NICHD inform evidence-based policies that support early interventions for neurodevelopmental disorders, leading to improved life outcomes for children and reducing long-term educational and healthcare costs.

NICHD's work on early childhood development and learning has an added economic benefit by enhancing workforce readiness and reducing the need for costly educational remediation programs, further reinforcing the value of federal investment in these critical areas.

Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative

FABBS urges Congress to provide \$468 million for the BRAIN Initiative in FY27, in line with the American Brain Coalition's recommendation. With resources from the 21st Century Cures Innovation Fund ending in FY26, it is imperative that Congress provide discretionary appropriations to allow this groundbreaking program to continue.

This initiative is driving innovative discoveries in neuroscience, with potential breakthroughs in brain research that could lead to treatments for neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and mental health conditions. Increased investment in brain research will save on long-term care and treatment costs while improving the quality of life for patients and families.

The broader economic impact of the BRAIN Initiative is substantial. As research progresses, breakthroughs in brain science will lead to new industries and create high-quality jobs, while simultaneously boosting U.S. global competitiveness and reducing healthcare costs associated with neurological disorders.

Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)

FABBS supports an increased investment of \$1.70 billion for ARPA-H in FY27 to accelerate transformative health research. This is in alignment with the broader scientific community's priorities. ARPA-H is uniquely positioned to fund high-risk, high-reward projects that build on NIH's traditional research portfolio. This agency has the potential to foster breakthrough solutions for critical health challenges, including neurological and psychiatric disorders.

ARPA-H funding will enable novel approaches to research that are crucial for accelerating advances in treatments and cures.

In addition to its direct impact on patient health, ARPA-H's investments will have a far-reaching economic effect, driving innovation and job creation in the biomedical sector. It will ensure that the U.S. remains competitive in an increasingly globalized research landscape.

Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education

As a member of the Friends of IES coalition, FABBS urges the Subcommittee to appropriate at least \$900 million for IES in FY27. IES plays a vital role in supporting rigorous education research that informs policies and practices to improve educational outcomes. Education research contributes to long-term economic benefits by reducing dropout rates, improving literacy and numeracy skills, and enhancing workforce readiness.

FABBS is deeply concerned about staffing at the agency and the status of unobligated FY25 funds. FABBS echoes concerns from the Friends of IES that FY25 research and training grant competitions for the National Center for Education Research (NCER) and the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) were closed without new award opportunities after submitted proposals went unreviewed for over a year. We strongly urge Congress to conduct oversight to reestablish the statutorily required peer review process and to include bill language, as in the FY26 law, ensuring that funds are apportioned by individual line items.

Investing in education research also has far-reaching effects on economic growth, workforce development, and national competitiveness. These investments not only create opportunities for future generations but also contribute to the overall health and well-being of communities across the country.

Clarification of Fund Allocations

As with FY26, FABBS urges the Subcommittee to include precise language in appropriations bills to ensure clear fund allocation. Clear language will help ensure that funds support the intended initiatives and improve accountability, ultimately advancing scientific discovery, patient health, and education outcomes.

As Congress considers FY27 funding, we urge the Subcommittee to ensure robust investment in NIH, ARPA-H, and IES to support the health, well-being, educational outcomes, and economic prosperity of all Americans. The health of our nation and millions of patients depends on timely and adequate funding for these critical research initiatives. Investments in these areas will yield long-term benefits that extend far beyond the health sector, strengthening our economy, global competitiveness, and national security.

Thank you for considering this testimony.