

HADASSAH



May 13, 2026

**The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair**

Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

**The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member**

Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

**The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair**

House Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

**The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member**

House Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Ranking Member Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

In recognition of National Women’s Health Week, Hadassah, The Women’s Zionist Organization of America, and the undersigned 27 organizations join together to urge the restoration of women’s health research funding and recognize the bipartisan leadership of Senators Susan Collins and Patty Murray and Representatives Tom Cole and Rosa DeLauro in championing increased funding for medical research to address pressing public health challenges. As a global leader in biomedical research and innovation, the United States has made exceptional advances in women’s health research and care over the last 30 years. However, the decision to terminate federal funding for projects dedicated to women’s health is undermining this progress and impacting the ability to study the unique health challenges faced by women.

Historically, women’s health has been underdiagnosed, underfunded and under-researched, leaving significant gaps in women’s healthcare. In 1990, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH) was established and codified into law three years later through the NIH Revitalization Act, mandating that women and minorities be included in all NIH-funded clinical research. This was a critical step toward better understanding the differential and disproportionate impact of certain diseases and conditions on women and was reinforced through the establishment of The Specialized Centers of Research Excellence (SCORE) on Sex Differences in 2002, which studies the role of biological sex differences on health.¹

¹ National Institutes of Health, [Specialized Centers of Research Excellence on Sex Differences \(U54 Clinical Trial Optional\)](#).

Yet decades later, despite representing over 50 percent of the US population, women only constitute 40 percent of participants in clinical trials for cancer, cardiovascular disease and psychiatric conditions, three conditions that impact women the most.² These gaps in funding mean that treatments, diagnostics and clinical guidelines are often based on data that excludes or underrepresents women. This underrepresentation has real, devastating impacts. The failure to study medications and other interventions in a broad sampling of women has contributed to women experiencing adverse effects from medications at twice the rate of men.³ At the same time, less than half of NIH-funded studies analyze or report their findings by sex, limiting the ability to understand how results may impact men and women differently.⁴

Investing in women's healthcare and research has the potential to boost the global economy by \$1 trillion annually by 2040.⁵ It is critical that Congress continue to fund research for conditions which disproportionately impact women and ensure that women and men are represented equally in clinical trials.

Disparities in biological sex appear in many areas affecting women's health. Cardiovascular disease, for example, is the leading cause of death for women, impacting over 60 million women in the US.⁶ Despite this, women still face delayed diagnoses, largely as a result of the lack of research into the biological differences between how cardiovascular disease manifests differently in men and women.⁷ Similar differences/disparities in biological sex exist in the screening, diagnosis and treatment of other diseases, including cancer, Alzheimer's and many autoimmune diseases. Without continued research and funding, these gaps will only be exacerbated.

Additionally, women in the US continue to face significant reproductive and maternal health gaps in diagnosis and care. The US has the highest rate of maternal deaths of any high-income nation, 80 percent of which are likely preventable.⁸ Endometriosis, a condition which affects approximately 6.5 million people in the US, was misdiagnosed as another health condition in over 75 percent of women.⁹ Alarming, menopause, a stage of health which will impact half of the population, is not properly considered in 99 percent of preclinical aging studies.¹⁰ In 2025, the Senate advanced legislation with bipartisan support to expand menopause research at the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense. This measure was stripped out of the final version of the National Defense Authorization Act, leaving this stage of life critically understudied. For the

² Association of American Medical Colleges, "[Why We Know so Little About Women's Health](#)," March 26, 2024.

³ Science Daily, "[Lack of Females in Drug Dose Trials Leads to Overmedicated Women](#)", August 12, 2020.

⁴ Nature Communications Medicine, "[Incorporation of the National Institute of Health \(NIH\) sex as a biological variable policy by R01 grant awardees](#)," April 27, 2026.

⁵ McKinsey Health Institute, "[Closing the Women's Health Gap: A \\$1 trillion Opportunity to Improve Lives and Economies](#)," January 17, 2024.

⁶ Society for Women's Health Research, "[Closing the Gender Gap for Women's Heart Health](#)," September 19, 2024.

⁷ McKinsey Health Institute, "[The State of US Women's Heart Health: A Path to Improved Health and Financial Outcomes](#)," June 25, 2024.

⁸ Commonwealth Fund, "[Insights into the US Maternal Mortality Crisis: An International Comparison](#), June 4, 2024."

⁹ National Library of Medicine, "[Patient Perceptions of Misdiagnosis of Endometriosis: Results From an Online National Survey](#)," May 26 2020.

¹⁰ Harvard Medical School, "[How Gaps in Research Lead to Gaps in Care for Aging Women](#)," January 10, 2024.

wellbeing of all women, it is crucial that funding be restored to maternal and reproductive health initiatives.

While there are still improvements to be made, research which includes women and focuses on how health conditions manifest differently in men and women, has pushed forward lifesaving advances in recent years. For example, robotic surgery has been introduced to complete coronary bypass surgery on women, who tend to have smaller arteries.¹¹ Research, which has led to earlier detection and more effective therapies, has resulted in the breast cancer death rate decreasing 44 percent from 1989 to 2022.¹² These are just a few of the vital advances in women's health that have been made possible as a result of funding for women's health research.

Current research in the areas of maternal health, cancers specific to women, such as cervical and breast cancer, mental health, eating disorders, sexually transmitted diseases that affect women, vaccines and pregnancy, and much more continues to be critical and we urge continued robust investment in these areas of research. While we were glad to see funding restored last year for the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), a longitudinal study that began in 1992 and involved over 161,000 participants, we have witnessed an alarming reduction in funding for women's health studies.

In Fiscal Year 2025, there was a 31 percent drop in the number of projects funded in 2025 that included the word "women."¹³ Among the woman-focused research grants that were canceled in 2025 was a grant on the structure and growth of uterine fibroid tumors, which affect up to 80 percent of women by the time they reach age 50.¹⁴ Funding was also eliminated for another multi-year study examining how social isolation, loneliness and barriers to care and support services affect the brain and associated risk of developing Alzheimer's¹⁵ – a disease whose patients are nearly two-thirds women.¹⁶

Without sustained funding, these critical studies cannot continue, threatening to reverse the hard-won progress that researchers have made and placing lives and future medical breakthroughs at risk.

We are grateful to Senators Susan Collins and Patty Murray and Representative Rosa DeLauro for stepping forward and speaking out about the critical need to restore funding to ensure that women's health outcomes do not suffer. We would also like to thank Representative Tom Cole for his historic efforts to secure increased funding for the NIH, including for Alzheimer's and dementia research, and to support biomedical research around this urgent public health issue.

We reinforce their calls to restore funding and urge Congress to act swiftly to restore and protect robust funding for research that studies women's health and the ways conditions both

¹¹ Annals of Cardiothoracic Surgery, "[Minimally Invasive Surgical Coronary Artery Bypass in Women](#)," November 27, 2023.

¹² American Cancer Society, "[Key Statistics for Breast Cancer](#)."

¹³ The Washington Post, "[Where U.S. science has been hit hardest after Trump's first year](#)," April 19, 2026.

¹⁴ Center for American Progress, "[How the Trump Administration's DOGE Cuts Are Harming Women](#)," June 9, 2025.

¹⁵ Center for American Progress, "[How the Trump Administration's DOGE Cuts Are Harming Women](#)," June 9, 2025.

¹⁶ Alzheimer's Association, "[Women and Alzheimer's](#)."

manifest differently in women and men, and the ways women and men respond differently to treatments. Ongoing women's health research funding is essential to ensuring that the progress we have made in improving women's health outcomes over the past 30 years does not regress. Women across the nation are counting on you to protect their health and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Hadassah, The Women's Zionist Organization of America

Alliance for Aging Research

Alzheimer's Association

Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM)

Association of Jewish Psychologists

Caregiver Action Network

FORCE: Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered

I Was Supposed to Have a Baby

Jofa (Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance)

LEAD Coalition (Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease)

Lewy Body Dementia Resource Center

Miles for Migraine

National Council of Jewish Women

National Women's Political Caucus

PUAH

Rabbinical Assembly

RESOLVE: The National Infertility & Family Building Association

SCAD (Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection) Alliance

Sharsheret

The American Society for Reproductive Medicine

The Balm In Gilead, Inc.

Tigerlily Foundation

Union for Reform Judaism

USCJ

Women of Reform Judaism

Women's Health Advocates

Women's League for Conservative Judaism

Yesh Tikva