**NAEVR SCORECARD LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>$29.15 B</td>
<td>$30.07 B</td>
<td>$30.3 B</td>
<td>$32.1 B</td>
<td>$34.08 B</td>
<td>$37.08 B</td>
<td>$39.08 B</td>
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<td>NET OF OPERATIONAL NET:</td>
<td>+3.5%</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
<td>+6.6%</td>
<td>+6.2%</td>
<td>+8.8%</td>
<td>+5.4%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>$623.13 M</td>
<td>$673.13 M</td>
<td>$708.24 M</td>
<td>$750.24 M</td>
<td>$781.24 M</td>
<td>$831.24 M</td>
<td>$871.24 M</td>
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* NEI appropriated amount is not of $36 M in sequester cut and $3.9 M Secretary transfer.
** NEI Operational Net reflects $6.9 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding and Secretary transfer.

Studies of Ocular Complications of AIDS (SOCA) funding.

NEI Operational Net reflects $7.9 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.

Congress Finalizes FY2019 with Nearly $30M More for Vision Research

On September 28, as NAEVR’s Emerging Vision Scientists (EVS) visited Capitol Hill, President Trump signed the Conference Report for H.R. 6157, the “minibus” appropriations bill that combines the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (LHHS) spending bills. The minibus bill, passed September 18 in the Senate by a vote of 93-7 and September 26 in the House by a vote of 361-61, includes:

- a $2 billion or 5.4 percent NIH increase to a funding level of $39.08 billion and a $24.2 million or 3.1 percent NEI increase to a funding level of $796.5 million.
- Department of Defense (DOD) Vision Research Program (VRP) funding at a record level of $20 million, or a $5 million increase from the prior funding level of $15 million in each FY2017 and FY2018.

The $24.2 million NEI increase and $5 million VRP increase mean a nearly $30 million increase in FY2019 vision research funding. H.R. 6157 also included a Continuing Resolution (CR), expiring on December 7, that funds remaining government programs for which appropriations had not been finalized prior to the start of FY2019 on October 1.

NAEVR Commends Funding Increases, but Recognizes Future Challenges

From FY2016 through 2019, Congress increased NIH funding by $9 billion and NEI funding by $120 million. Although NAEVR will advocate for a continued pattern of robust funding in FY2020, it faces significant challenges, including:

- Securing new bipartisan champions for vision research in the 116th Congress.
- President Trump advising agencies to propose FY2020 budgets that reduce spending by at least 5 percent.
- A return to a Budget Control Act cap on NonDefense Discretionary spending which is below that of actual FY2019 funding, unless Congress reaches a bipartisan budget agreement—preferably multi-year.

On August 24, Congressman Mike Coffman (R-CO) visited the Department of Ophthalmology at the University of Colorado at the invitation of Natalia Vergara, PhD, who met with him in September 2017 during AERV’s Third Annual Emerging Vision Scientists Advocacy Day. His visit included touring the Ocular Stem Cell Lab, where he observed human retinas growing in a petri dish. Dr. Vergara and colleagues discussed the potential therapeutic applications of the technology, as well as the critical role of federal funding for vision research.

Advocates Urge Robust Funding as Congress Considers Appropriations

On September 13, NAEVR and ARVO participated in the sixth annual Rally for Medical Research Advocacy Day. The event, for which NAEVR served as a Bronze Sponsor, engaged more than 200 researchers and advocates in nearly 500 Capitol Hill meetings as Congressional leaders were finalizing the H.R. 6157 Conference Report. In a September 12 reception, Rally organizers displayed a poster quote from NAEVR President Dr. McDonnell that recognized NEI’s fifty years of support for sight-saving and vision-restoring research. NAEVR has supported Rally events since the first was held in 2013.

Visit the NIH/NEI funding section of NAEVR’s Web site at www.eyeresearch.org for full details.