

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you and your colleagues begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you fund the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) at the FY 2015 level of \$364 million. AHRQ is an essential element of the nation's healthcare ecosystem, charged with improving the quality and delivery of healthcare; we ask that this committee fully support AHRQ in its mission as it makes appropriations decisions.

AHRQ sits at the critical intersection where patient need meets healthcare delivery. It is the only federal agency whose sole focus is to generate reliable research on how to deliver the highest quality care, at the greatest value, with the best outcomes. AHRQ-funded research allows us to understand where waste, inefficiencies, and gaps exist within the healthcare continuum, and allows patients, payers, providers, and others to harness American innovation and make the healthcare system safer, more efficient, and more effective. We have seen an explosion of promising innovations in the healthcare field but, without AHRQ-funded research and data to ensure that those innovations are delivered to patients in need as optimally as possible, we are falling short of our promises to the American people.

AHRQ works in close contact with both the public and private sectors to develop public-private partnerships which ensure that local, as well as national, healthcare needs are being met. AHRQ works across the spectrum of healthcare, assessing the impact of mental health programs on youth recidivism, improving nursing training, ensuring that medicine becomes ever more patient-centered, developing 21<sup>st</sup> Century health IT infrastructure, and beyond.

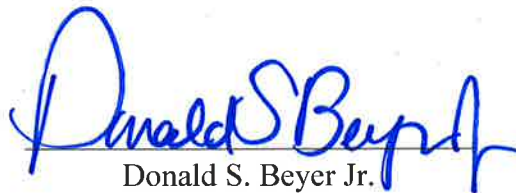
Thanks in part to AHRQ, the rate of hospital-acquired conditions has dropped by 21 percent, saving Americans nearly \$28 billion. The AHRQ-funded Comparative Health System Performance Initiative will identify the best practices from high performing health systems and translate those lessons to better patient-centered outcomes in other health systems. AHRQ is also

on the front lines of the battle against the opioid epidemic, providing doctors in rural communities the support they need to develop effective medication assisted therapy protocols that could save thousands of lives.

The research and programs that AHRQ funds help healthcare providers understand how they can provide better care to patients, help patients understand how they can take charge of their own health, and help payers understand where their dollars are going and how they are being used. The modest investment that this committee makes in AHRQ reaps millions of dollars in savings each year, keeps Americans healthier, and helps to ensure that our healthcare system is innovative and responsive to patients' needs.

Nearly two thirds of federal spending is traced back to healthcare and healthcare delivery. In the austere budget environment we are currently facing, every dollar that we invest in researching healthcare and streamlining its delivery is a sound investment in our fiscal future. AHRQ's research will help close our fiscal gap by helping us to eliminate the 30 percent of healthcare spending identified as inappropriate, ineffective, or harmful. Just as we fund national war colleges to ensure that our military is the most effective fighting force in the world, funding AHRQ ensures that our healthcare system becomes the most efficient one in the world. We urge you to make AHRQ, and its critical research, a priority in FY 2018.

Sincerely,



Donald S. Beyer Jr.



Danny K. Davis



John Conyers, Jr.



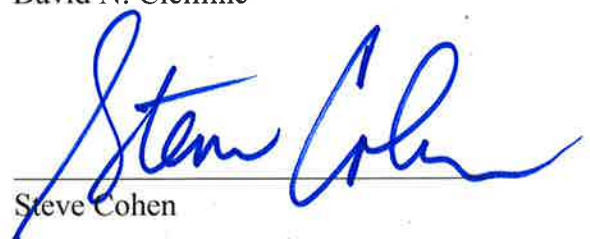
John Garamendi



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Eleanor Holmes Norton



Steve Cohen



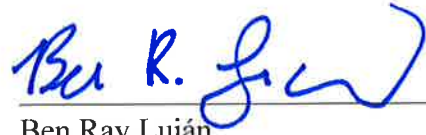
Peter A. DeFazio



Carolyn B. Maloney



Tony Cárdenas



Ben Ray Luján



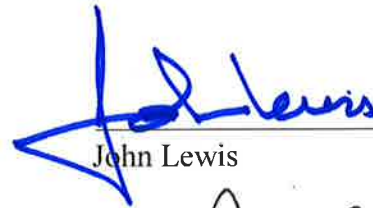
Mark DeSaulnier



Bill Foster



Bobby L. Rush



John Lewis



Denny Heck



Adam Smith



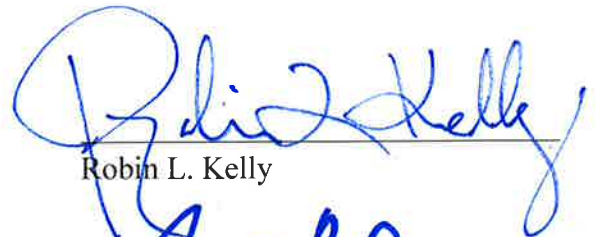
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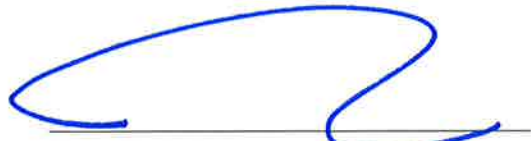
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