

99%, and resulted in promising advances in the fight against antibiotic resistance. This has made the United States a world leader in biomedical research, however, there is concern that this position could be overtaken by Asian countries whose overall research spending has increased from 27% in 2003 to 40% a decade later.

Restoring the Budget

In light of the impact of research on health and the economy, the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has recommended that biomedical research funding be increased. [FASEB has recommended](#) that the NIH budget be at least \$35 billion in the 2018 financial year. It has also recommended that the National Science Foundation (NSF) has a budget of at least \$8 billion and the Department of Energy Office of Science has a budget of \$5.8 billion.

Initially, the Trump administration had declared an intention to decrease federal support of the NIH. A proposed decrease in support for biological research by cutting the NIH budget by \$1 billion in 2017 was opposed by Congress. This budget was later raised by \$2 billion. Trump has proposed a 2018 budget that includes a decrease in U.S. biomedical research funding, including a \$5.8 billion decrease in the NIH budget. It is hoped that a recent two hour White House meeting with academic leadership and biotech executives may persuade the President to consider restoring the budget.

After summarizing the impact of the NIH on improving health and its contribution to the economy, the biotech executives present explained that private investment could not cover the gap in support for basic research that would exist if the budget were to be further decreased. The White House meeting attendees also pointed out that recent immigration policy changes mean that foreign research talent is either choosing to stay away from positions in the US or choosing to leave the US for opportunities elsewhere.

The Future of Biomedical Research

The impact of biomedical research on the discovery of a cure for diseases and the economy cannot be denied. The support that the NIH budget provides for research and innovation needs further strengthening. However, the current administration has not shared this view and has proposed a decrease in biomedical research funding. Between 2003 and 2015, NIH research funding trends have indicated a steady decline in the ability to support research activities across the country. Only time will tell if this White House meeting had the desired effect. In the meantime, the fate of thousands of researchers remains uncertain.

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