

NAEVR SCORECARD LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

FINAL FY2021

On December 27, the President signed into law the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021* (H.R. 133), which included all twelve final FY2021 appropriations bills, and the accompanying *Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021* with \$900 billion in COVID-19 relief. Highlights include:

- NIH funding of \$42.934 billion, a \$1.250 billion or 3 percent increase over the comparable FY2020 level, which includes \$404 million for NIH through the Innovation Account for 21st Century Cures Act initiatives.
- NEI funding of \$835.7 million, an \$11.62 million or 1.4 percent increase over enacted FY2020 funding of \$824.1 million. Institutes and Centers (I/Cs) without special initiatives received this increase below the biomedical inflation rate of 2.4 percent.
- The COVID supplemental provides \$1.25 billion overall for NIH, \$1.15 billion for emergency funding for “research and clinical trials related to long-term COVID-19 studies” and \$100 million for the Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) program, available through September 30, 2024.
- Neither the appropriations or supplemental portions of the bill included scientific agency relief funding for grantees due to COVID-19 lab closures.

Although NAEVR issued a press statement expressing appreciation that the bill includes an NIH funding increase that keeps pace with inflation and emergency funding, NEI’s less-than-inflationary increase means that it will need to balance funding of new competing grants with noncompeting grant out-years.

	FY2015 FINAL*	FY2016 FINAL**	FY2017 FINAL	FY2018 FINAL	FY2019 FINAL	FY2020 FINAL	FY2021 FINAL*
NIH	\$30.3 B +0.5%	\$32.1 B +6.6%	\$34.08 B +6.2%	\$37.08 B +8.8%	\$39.08 B +5.4%	\$41.68 B +6.7%	\$42.93 B +3%
NEI	APPROP: \$684.2 M +0.3% OPERATIONAL NET: \$676.8 M	APPROP: \$715.9 M +4.6% OPERATIONAL NET: \$708 M	APPROP: \$732.6 M +3.5% OPERATIONAL NET: \$731.2 M	APPROP: \$772.3 M +5.6% OPERATIONAL NET: \$770.5 M	APPROP: \$796.5 M +3.1% OPERATIONAL NET: \$793.8 M	APPROP: \$824.09 M +3.5% OPERATIONAL NET: \$823.3 M	APPROP: \$835.71 M +1.4%

* NEI Operational Net reflects \$7.4 M transferred back to NIH Central of Studies of Ocular Complications of AIDS (SOCA) funding.
 *** NEI Operational Net reflects \$7.9 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.
 ^ Does not include research relief funding for NIH grantees.

Advocacy for FY2022 NIH/NEI Appropriations, Research Relief

On March 11, President Biden signed into law *The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021* (H.R. 1319), the \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill which has been the legislative focus at the start of the 117th Congress but does not provide scientific agency research relief. Democratic leaders are eager to pivot to another sweeping stimulus package addressing infrastructure, climate, health care, and numerous other priorities.

In that regard, NAEVR has joined with its advocacy colleagues in reaching out to the House Energy and Commerce (E&C) Committee and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee staff to push for NIH grantee research relief in that stimulus. Both the House (H.R. 869) and Senate (S. 289) have re-introduced the *Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act* that would authorize \$26 billion for research relief for federal science agencies, including \$10

billion for the NIH, to address setbacks in research due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although the Biden Administration’s first budget has not yet issued—a “skinny” version is expected later in March—Congressional offices have set deadlines for Programmatic Requests. NAEVR is requesting:

- NIH funding of at least \$46.1 billion, a \$3.2 billion or 7.4 percent increase reflecting 2.4 percent biomedical inflation plus five percent growth.
- NEI funding of at least \$900 million, a \$64.3 million or 7.7 percent increase reflecting 2.4 percent biomedical inflation and 5.3 percent growth.



ARVO Advocates Request FY2022 NIH/NEI Funding Increases, Research Relief

On February 19, NAEVR managed ARVO’s first virtual Advocacy Day which engaged members of ARVO’s Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Science Communication Training Fellows, Advocacy Awards winners, and ARVO Advocacy and Outreach Committee Chair Peter Koulen, PhD (University of Missouri, Kansas City) and Chair-elect Professor Stephanie Watson, MBBS, PhD. ARVO’s domestic and international advocates made 50 calls to their Congressional delegations which included several Members assigned to key committees with NIH funding and oversight jurisdiction.

As in past years, the February date for the event meant that vision researchers were among the first advocates to request FY2022 NIH/NEI funding increases, as well as \$10 million in NIH grantee research relief—supporting that request with personal accounts of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic clinical and laboratory shutdowns/slowdowns on their research.

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