

January 22, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. President, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy,

The undersigned organizations, representing millions of American patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, and researchers write to raise alarm at the continued government shutdown – particularly its impact on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The work of the FDA to protect the health and wellbeing of our nation cannot be overstated. The agency regulates one quarter of the U.S. economy, ensures a safe food supply, protects patients from contaminated and unsafe medical products and, importantly, is the catalyst for expediting lifesaving therapies to patients.

On behalf of patients across this country, we are greatly concerned that the agency is currently not fully funded, and thousands of vital FDA employees are not working or able to operate at full capacity. While we applaud Commissioner Gottlieb, FDA leadership, and “essential staff” for truly heroic work to keep many aspects of its mission functioning, we fear that this continued shutdown not only puts the current health and safety of Americans at risk, but has begun to put future scientific discovery and innovation in jeopardy.

The ongoing government shutdown forces the FDA to make difficult choices regarding to which essential functions its greatly reduced resources are directed. These are decisions that never should have to be made—the health and safety of Americans today should never be weighed against the prospect of new life-saving therapies for patients. Tragically, that is what is happening.

We ask that the President and Congress act immediately to bring the FDA back to its full capacity. Americans’ health and patients’ futures are at stake.

Sincerely,

Acromegaly Community
Addario Lung Cancer Medical Institute
AIM at Melanoma
AliveAndKickn
Alliance for Aging Research
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO)
American Society of Gene & Cell Therapy
Annie Appleseed Project
Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI)
Bonnie J. Addario Lung Cancer Foundation
Bridge the Gap - SYNGAP Education and Research Foundation
CancerCare
Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation
Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowerment (FORCE)
Fight Colorectal Cancer
Friends of Cancer Research
Institute of Clinical Bioethics, Saint Joseph's University
Kidney Cancer Action Network (KCAN)
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Living Beyond Breast Cancer
Lung Cancer Alliance
LUNgevity Foundation
Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF)
Men's Health Network
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship (NCCS)
National Consumers League
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Diseases (NORD)
National Osteoporosis Foundation
National Patient Advocate Foundation
NTM Info & Research, Inc.
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance
Pancreatic Cancer Action Network
Patients for Affordable Drugs
Personalized Medicine Coalition
Prevent Cancer Foundation
Research Advocacy Network
Research!America
St. Baldrick's Foundation
Stand Up To Cancer
Swiftly Foundation