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January 6, 2026

The Honorable Robert Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue  
SW Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

As you know, for decades, presidential administrations from both political parties have funded and supported the work of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). NIH funding to hospitals, universities and research institutions has been responsible for the discovery of cures and treatments that have saved the lives of millions of people across the globe. This funding also drives economic growth and jobs in every corner of our country.

It is why I have been so alarmed by the devastating – and politically motivated – cuts to NIH funding that you and the Trump administration have chosen to implement. When I asked you about the impact of these cuts at our meeting on October 23, you assured me that no clinical trials had been stopped and no patients were affected by any of your cuts, and you challenged me to show you any proof to the contrary.

**I am writing with proof that your misguided NIH cuts have stopped hundreds of clinical trials into potential lifesaving cures and treatments, and impacted tens of thousands of patients already.**

On November 17, JAMA Internal Medicine published a report, *Clinical Trials Affected by Research Grant Terminations at the National Institutes of Health*, which found that “[o]ver 74,000 people enrolled in experiments have been affected by the National Institutes of Health’s funding cuts.” According to the report, NIH grant funding disruptions affected more than 380

unique trials nationally, representing approximately 1 in 30 clinical trials. These actions disproportionately affected studies related to infectious diseases, prevention, and behavioral interventions.

My administration has spoken directly to Massachusetts' leading health care and research institutions, as well as the authors of this study, to better understand the impact on Massachusetts. There are at least 18 clinical trials and 13,000 patients that have been affected by disruptions to NIH funding in Massachusetts alone. Implicated trials include studies on colorectal cancer, strokes, gestational diabetes, depression, vaccine hesitancy, pregnancy complications, and osteoporosis.

These findings are alarming. Clinical trials turn scientific discovery into life-changing treatments. Any disruption to these trials can have devastating consequences for critical advancements in health as well as patients.

Massachusetts is uniquely positioned to speak to the importance of research and discovery. Our educational, health care, and life science institutions have developed some of the most important discoveries in history, including game-changing treatments for cancers, heart disease, and other rare diseases, as well as vaccines for polio, measles, and – most recently – COVID-19 under President Trump. Millions of people across the world have been saved by Massachusetts science.

We also demonstrate the economic impact that a strong research system in this country can have. Our educational and medical institutions produce more than \$155 billion in annual economic output, and support more than 858,000 jobs. One in every 10 research and development jobs in the nation are based in Massachusetts, and we are home to approximately 160,000 jobs in the Life Sciences industry. Over 15% of drug candidates in the national pipeline are Massachusetts companies, and we are one of the leading states in most patents per capita.

We are seeing the impact of cuts to research and science every day. Your NIH director – at an event in Boston just last month – has even acknowledged that fewer research projects have been funded under your tenure. In addition to the cuts that have already been made, we know that hundreds of millions of additional “paused” federal dollars for research have yet to be reinstated. That crippling uncertainty chills innovation and is greatly enhanced by the Trump administration’s irresponsible budget proposal to Congress that calls for a more than 25% cut to research funding going forward.

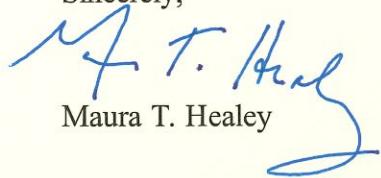
These cuts also impact America’s economic standing in the world. China and European countries have used your administration’s rejection of science as a reason to actively recruit our best researchers and scientists. This means that the discoveries and innovations of tomorrow – along with the companies and jobs that result from them – will be created in China and Europe, and not here in the United States of America.

You also recently reached an agreement with Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Campbell regarding the Trump Administration's unlawful delay of NIH grant applications which included lifesaving studies into Alzheimer's disease, cancer and other illnesses. That is an important step – which unfortunately needed to be forced upon you by a legal challenge. This agreement doesn't address the outright cuts that have halted these clinical trials, and still does not assure that the Trump administration will fund necessary and lifesaving studies now that the review process must move forward. Last night's First Circuit decision striking down another unlawful NIH action also does not reach that far, though we celebrate the fact it will stop you and the Trump Administration from crippling NIH funding recipients through limits on expenditures for indirect costs like equipment, operations, and maintenance.

Massachusetts cannot drive America's medical and economic leadership on our own – we need a federal partner. I urge you to restore any and all funding cuts that support clinical trials in Massachusetts and this country, as well as reverse the major cuts to NIH research proposed in your next budget. And I strongly urge you to set forth a strategy for funding future research that is based on merit and sound policy, not zip code and politics.

You asked me to offer any proof that clinical trials had been stopped due to your actions. Now you have it. I ask now that you act to fix this immediately by doing what presidential administrations from both parties have done for decades – unlocking NIH funding to drive the medical breakthroughs and job creation that benefit families in Massachusetts and every corner of our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. T. Healey".

Maura T. Healey