The Best Investment You Didn't Know You Made: How NIH Funding Fuels Innovation and Economic Growth

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is the world's leading medical research agency, funding and conducting groundbreaking scientific studies and improving public health. Over the past decade, the NIH was responsible for supporting the development of nearly all FDA-approved drugs in the U.S. NIH funding also stimulates the economy, creates jobs, and puts dollars into local economies through employment at research institutions and purchases of grant-related materials and services in all 50 states. Continued investment in the NIH is essential to fighting current and emerging health threats, from pandemics to chronic diseases, and to ensuring the U.S. remains a global leader in medical innovation.

Every American Benefits:

The NIH is responsible for the development of commonly used drugs for hypertension, cancer, and other infectious and chronic diseases. Once a promising drug target is identified through NIH-funded research, pharmaceutical companies step in to develop, test, and bring drugs to market—but this process relies on decades of public investment.

NIH-funded research contributed to the development of 354 of 356 drugs (99.4%) approved in the U.S. between 2010 and 2019.*

Investing in NIH Is Investing in America

Reducing NIH funding will have severe and lasting consequences. It:

- Shrinks the pipeline of lifesaving treatments for diseases and conditions that affect Americans;
- Slows medical innovation and limits progress against diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's, and HIV;
- Leaves America without the expertise we need to address future health challenges;
- Cedes U.S. leadership in biomedical research to other nations.

Robust NIH funding is essential for protecting the health of every American and securing our economic future.

*Galkina Cleary E, Jackson MJ, Zhou EW, Ledley FD. Comparison of Research Spending on New Drug Approvals by the National Institutes of Health vs the Pharmaceutical Industry, 2010-2019. *JAMA Health Forum*. 2023;4(4):e230511. doi:10.1001/jamahealthforum.2023.0511

Examples of NIH-funded medical breakthroughs that have reshaped American lives

Heart Disease

Over 120 million American adults (nearly half) have cardiovascular disease. The NIH-funded Farmingham Heart Study is among the longest running medical studies in the world. It has identified many modifiable risk factors for heart disease and is partially responsible for a 52% reduction in premature heart attacks since 1999.

Cancer

1.9 million Americans are diagnosed with cancer each year. Investments in NIH HIV research helped with the development of immune inhibitor therapies, such as PD-1 inhibitors, which have revolutionized cancer treatment. PD-1 inhibitors such as Pembrolizumab (Keytruda), Nivolumab (Opdivo), and others have doubled five-year survival rates for cancers like advanced melanomas.

HIV

1.2 million Americans are living with HIV. *Science's* 2024 Breakthrough of the Year was a new HIV prevention drug, lenacapavir, which was developed using evidence from NIH-funded research. In a landmark clinical trial, lenacapavir, which is administered just twice a year, prevented 100% of new HIV infections and is poised to reshape the HIV pandemic.

Alzheimer's

6.7 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease and that number is expected to more than double by 2060 without new breakthroughs. Decades of NIH research built the scientific foundations for the first two FDA-approved treatments for Alzheimer's. Twenty new Alzheimer's drugs have arisen from NIH development programs and are in either Phase I or II clinical trials.

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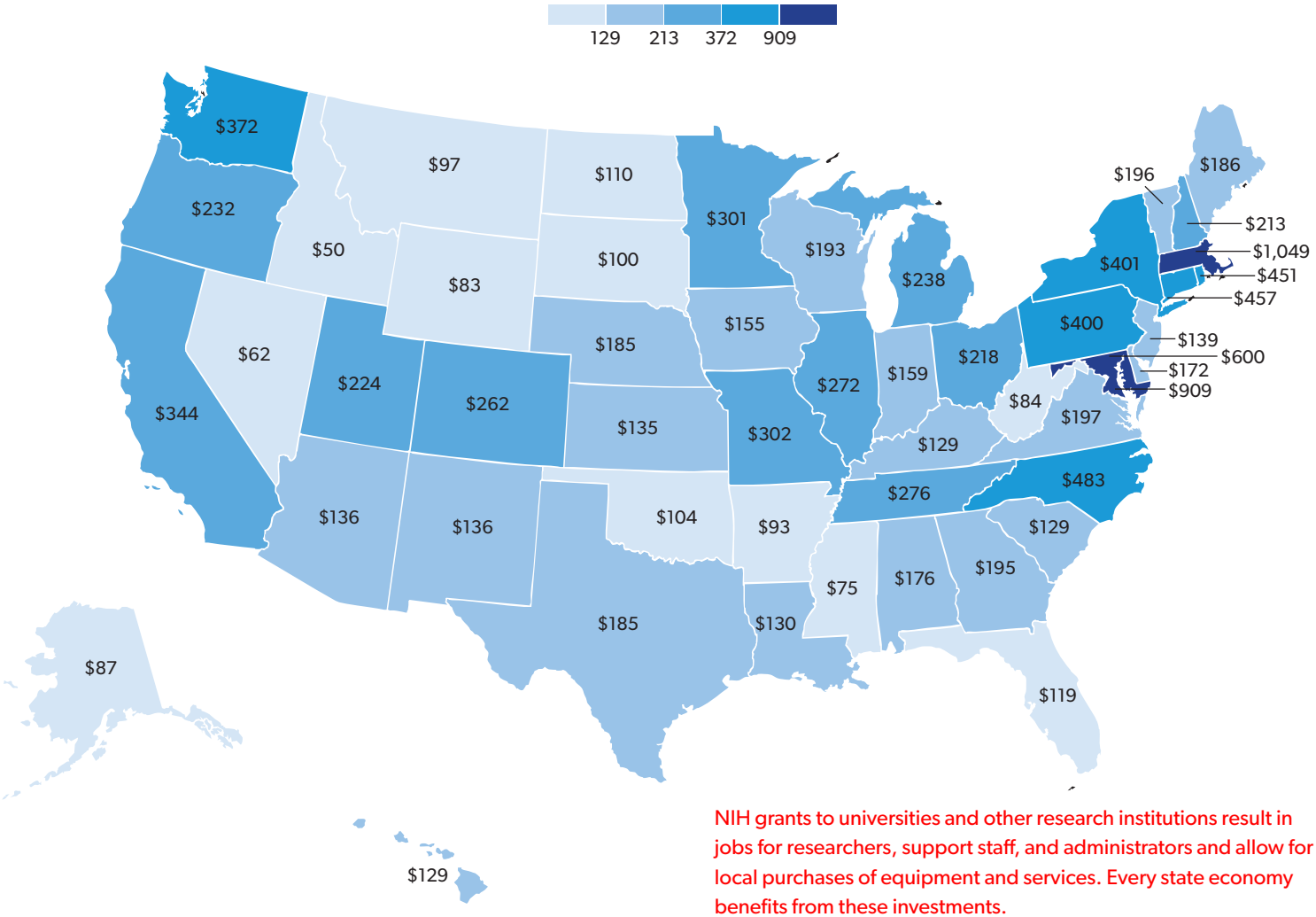
Every State Benefits:

Each year the NIH awards over 60,000 grants that support over 300,000 researchers at more than 2,500 institutions across the U.S. **For every $1 of NIH funding received, a state generates $2.46 on average in increased economic activity.** The map below shows the amount of economic return from NIH investments per person each year, state by state.

ANNUAL ECONOMIC RETURN PER PERSON FOR NIH INVESTMENTS (USD)



NIH grants to universities and other research institutions result in jobs for researchers, support staff, and administrators and allow for local purchases of equipment and services. Every state economy benefits from these investments.

United for Medical Research (UMR) used the Bureau of Economic Analysis' Regional Input-Output Modeling System, or RIMS II, to analyze employment and economic activity linked to NIH research activity.

Source: United for Medical Research (UMR) and U.S. Census data , 2024

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