

Statement for the Record:

Bipartisan Senate Hearing: Biomedical Research—Keeping America’s Edge in Innovation

On behalf of Emory University, thank you for the opportunity to share the university’s perspective on the fundamental role biomedical research plays in advancing cures for patients, driving economic growth, and boosting America’s spirit of innovation.

The mission of Emory’s Woodruff Health Sciences Center is to improve lives and provide hope through transformative research and health care excellence and its 37,000 employees, from oncologists to operating room nurses, arrive every day eager to carry out this mission. Whether in a laboratory, patient exam room, or community health center, the biomedical research they conduct enables groundbreaking discoveries that propel progress and help ensure a better life for the people of Georgia and beyond.

Over the years, this research has contributed to significant advancements in treating diseases like cancer, Alzheimer’s, infectious diseases, and cardiovascular conditions—offering life-changing therapies to patients across the globe. One such example of federally supported research that led to a major breakthrough in cancer treatment and prevention was the development of **abatacept**.

Abatacept is the first FDA-approved drug that permits people with cancer to receive bone marrow and stem cell transplants from donors who aren’t a perfect match without risking potentially deadly complications that can occur when the donor’s immune cells recognize the recipient’s body as foreign and attack it. Abatacept currently is contributing to improved survival rates for both adult and children stricken by cancer.

In fact, nearly every major breakthrough Emory has helped engineer has federal funding in its DNA, whether in the early stages of a transformative discovery or later in a groundbreaking clinical trial. Such milestones underscore the profound impact of sustained investment in biomedical research. Examples of how this work continues today all across the state include:

- Dr. Amit Shah, a cardiologist and professor of epidemiology, is in the midst of a five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help answer a critical question – why younger women in rural communities are experiencing higher rates of premature coronary heart disease. This work will produce important insights for rural Georgians’ heart health that can be replicated and applied in communities throughout the nation.
- Jonathon Cohen, a hematologist and medical oncologist at the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, often sees patients who need cancer therapy but are forced to drive for hours across the state in order to take part in Atlanta-based clinical trials. As a researcher studying lymphoma — cancer that originates in the body’s lymph nodes — he’s working to change that by building connections with oncologists in Georgia to create broader access to the complex clinical infrastructure for people outside major population centers. His own research, as well as research by others, has also shown that patients who have the opportunity to participate in clinical trials live longer. This work is possible through a grant from NIH.

Fueling the Economic Engine

The economic contributions of biomedical research cannot be undersold. Medical research, including cancer research, brings huge benefits to the state of Georgia. In 2024, NIH invested \$783 million in

medical research in Georgia. These dollars supported 11,593 jobs and are estimated to have stimulated a total of \$2.27 billion in economic activity within the state. But this illustrates only a fraction of the catalyzing effect biomedical research has on the region.

The downstream impact of this employment extends to other sectors. Learners from around the world choose to advance their education here because of the strength of our biomedical research; many of these learners stay in Georgia after they complete their training. By nurturing an innovation ecosystem, a robust research enterprise attracts top talent and fosters collaborations with industries, small businesses, and academic institutions, amplifying the economic impact on the region. In total, Emory produces **\$19.3 billion** of economic activity and directly or indirectly supports about **100,000** jobs statewide each year.

Turning federal dollars into societal output

Emory strives to repay the trust of the Americans taxpayers, not only as a responsible steward of research dollars from breakthroughs to the bedside, but by rooting itself in the vitality of the region. Large-scale academic medical centers, like Emory, are embedded into the framework of their communities and the success of the institution is inextricably linked to the long-term health of its surrounding neighborhoods.

Federal funding of research allows Emory to continuously accomplish its institutional objectives while making sure that the fulfillment of those functions not only creates economic benefit but also social benefit for the people and households in its immediate community. One tangible example of this is the nearly **44,000 aggregate community service hours** performed by Emory students and employees, which represent a wide range of service activities and engagement opportunities throughout Emory's immediate community.

What's at stake

Ultimately, federal support for biomedical research is essential, providing the resources necessary to tackle urgent health challenges, drive innovation, and foster workforce development. Cuts or stagnation in research funding jeopardize these efforts and could have far-reaching consequences for both patients and communities. Even a short interruption of research funding could setback scientific progress for decades, as cutting off the availability of training opportunities will reduce the pipeline of employees entering the biomedical labor force and create a scarcity of talent capable of carrying out the next giant leap forward in scientific discovery.

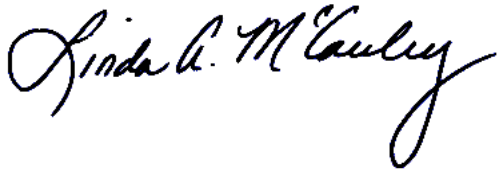
We urge Congress to continue prioritizing bipartisan investment in biomedical research. Doing so secures our nation's legacy as a global leader in scientific discovery, strengthens our health care system, and bolsters local economies, including Georgia's, through job creation and innovation.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of this issue. Emory University stands ready to collaborate and contribute further to ensuring that biomedical research remains a cornerstone of American progress and prosperity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Daniele Fallin".

M. Daniele Fallin, Dean of Public Health, Emory University

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda A. McCauley".

Linda McCauley, Dean of Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, Emory University

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Wong".

Sandra Wong, MD, MS, Dean Emory School of Medicine, Chief Academic Officer Emory Healthcare