

Capitol Hill Telephone Call Talking Points
Advocating for NIH and NIA Funding
Emphasizing the Value of the Aging Research Ecosystem

When Calling the Office:

Receptionist or person answering the phone:

Hi, my name is [YOUR NAME], and I'm a constituent of Representative/Senator [NAME], living in [CITY/STATE], ZIP code [#####]. I'm calling to express my strong support for funding the National Institutes of Health, especially the National Institute on Aging. Could I please speak to the staff member who works on health or NIH policy?

If no one is available:

That's okay—I'd like to leave a message. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I called on [DATE] at [TIME]. My phone number is [PHONE NUMBER]. I'm asking for a call back to discuss NIH funding, particularly its role in supporting research that improves health and well-being as we age. If possible, could you also share the appropriate staffer's email address so I can follow up directly?

When Speaking with a Health Policy Staff Member:

Hi [STAFFER'S NAME], thank you for speaking with me. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I live in [CITY/STATE], ZIP code [#####], in Representative/Senator [NAME]'s district. I'm a researcher in the field of [YOUR AREA OF RESEARCH], and I'm calling today to highlight the critical role of NIH—especially the National Institute on Aging—in advancing health and well-being across the lifespan.

(Optional:) I'm also a [TITLE] at [UNIVERSITY/INSTITUTION].

How are you today?

Why NIH and the Research Ecosystem Matter:

The National Institutes of Health plays a foundational role in supporting a vibrant health and aging research ecosystem—one that fuels innovation, trains future scientists, and delivers discoveries that directly impact how we live, age, and thrive.

This ecosystem is not just about science—it's about people. It's about helping Americans stay healthier longer, preventing chronic diseases, supporting caregivers, and reducing healthcare costs by identifying what works across our life course.

My own research focuses on [BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR RESEARCH], which contributes to a better understanding of how we can extend both **lifespan** and **healthspan**—ensuring more of us live not just longer, but better lives as we age.

The Broader Impact:

NIH funding does more than support individual labs—it sustains the infrastructure of discovery across the country. It supports universities, medical centers, early-career scientists, and partnerships that turn basic science into clinical breakthroughs.

For example:

- NIH-funded research has helped identify **biomarkers for early Alzheimer's detection**.
- It has advanced our understanding of **the biology of aging**, linking it to multiple chronic diseases.
- It underpins progress in areas like **cancer immunotherapy, mobility interventions, and mental health across the life course**.

Economic and Workforce Value:

NIH funding is also an economic engine. In Fiscal Year 2024 alone, NIH investment supported **over 407,000 jobs** and generated **\$94.6 billion** in economic activity in the United States. For every \$1 invested, NIH returns **\$2.50** to our economy.

In [YOUR STATE], NIH funded [INSERT STATE-SPECIFIC DOLLAR AMOUNT] in research, supporting local jobs and institutions while making a national and global impact.

(Using the [map linked here](#), highlight the NIH's investment for Fiscal Year 2024 in the state the Member of Congress is in. For example, Texas saw \$1.8 billion in investments, and South Dakota saw \$29 million.)

But this ecosystem is fragile. Budget cuts don't just delay discoveries—they stall careers, slow innovation, and risk losing a generation of researchers dedicated to improving our quality of life as we age.

Our Request:

I urge [MEMBER NAME] to support a funding level of **\$51.3 billion** for NIH in **Fiscal Year 2026**, consistent with the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research and the Friends of NIA.

This investment sustains the research ecosystem that keeps Americans healthier, strengthens the economy, and advances breakthroughs that benefit everyone—especially as we face an aging population.

Closing:

Thank you for your time and your commitment to ensuring that federal research funding remains a national priority. I'd be happy to follow up with more details or materials—just let me know what would be most helpful.

Would you like a tailored one-pager or email follow-up version of this message to share with offices after your call?