BACKGROUND: The Budget Control Act (BCA) of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) established caps on discretionary spending over 10 years, with roughly $1 trillion in cuts spread across both defense and non-defense programs. The Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA) of 2018 (and of 2015 and 2013 before that) has provided temporary relief from the BCA’s austerity policies.

THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE: The budget caps established by the BCA legislation are still in effect and if unadjusted by policymakers will reduce authorized spending levels by tens of billions of dollars across defense and non-defense programs, including scientific research and public health programs, beginning in 2020.

Without a bipartisan compromise to raise the spending caps and stop sequestration, research and other non-defense discretionary programs face a $55 billion funding cliff.

BUDGET CAPS FOR NONDEFENSE DISCRETIONARY FUNDING FY 2018 - FY 2020 (IN BILLIONS)
RAISE THE CAPS FOR RESEARCH

In 2013, across the board cuts required the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to cut 5 percent, or $1.55 billion, of its budget evenly across all programs, projects, and activities (PPAs), impacting every area of medical research.

According to NIH\(^1\), in fiscal year 2013 (compared with fiscal year 2012):

- Approximately **640 fewer competitive research project grants** were issued
- Approximately **750 fewer new patients** were admitted to the NIH Clinical Center
- There was no increase in stipends for National Research Service Award recipients.

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), which saw a total decrease of approximately 6 percent, and in fiscal year 2013:

- Approximately **54 fewer research grants** were issued
- There were no stipend increases to training grants
- Non-competing research project grants and Centers grants were reduced by **four percent**.

In every year since, Congress has used the relief from the Bipartisan Budget Acts to restore the NIH budget, providing $2+ billion increases in each of the last four years. However, without another deal to raise the spending caps, biomedical research will likely face cuts due to the lack of funding available for nondefense programs.

**Thus, the American Association for Dental Research calls on policymakers to raise the budget caps on nondefense discretionary funding for 2020 and 2021 to allow for sustained investments in biomedical research.**

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