

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

March 14, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

It has come to our attention that the Administration is planning to announce a major reorganization of health research and services agencies, including the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).<sup>1</sup> This reorganization may include the elimination of the Agency and the termination of hundreds of government employees and the lawfully mandated patient-centered research they oversee. AHRQ is the only federal agency with statutory authorization to generate health services research. Their work improves health care quality, effectiveness, and accessibility by determining what works, how, for whom, and at what cost –driving meaningful change. That is why we oppose the elimination or reduction in force (RIF) of this lifesaving Agency without congressional approval.

For several years, we have called on Congress to fully fund AHRQ through the appropriations process and have heard from our constituents and frontline health systems about the importance of this Agency. Just last month, the Friends of AHRQ sent a letter signed by 194 leading organizations representing researchers, patients, doctors, nurses, health systems, hospitals, insurers, universities, think tanks, and more calling on Congress to fully fund an intact Agency to improve the health outcomes of all Americans<sup>2</sup>. This widespread support is clear evidence of the importance and unique value of AHRQ. The Agency saves lives, reduces unnecessary health spending, and improves the budgets of the governments, hospitals, and kitchen tables alike.

Since your nomination, you have claimed to prioritize an effort to make America healthy again and to reduce the chronic disease burden on patients. AHRQ has a long and ongoing history of funding research on the development and implementation of evidence-based interventions to prevent and treat chronic disease and how the real-life patient exists in or outside

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<sup>1</sup> Reader, Ruth, Cirruzzo, Chelsea, Cancryn Adam., “HHS braces for reorganization”. Politico. March 13, 2025.  
<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2025/03/hhs-braces-for-a-reorganization-00230113>

<sup>2</sup> Letter, Friends of AHRQ call on Congress to fully fund AHRQ. March 3, 2025.  
[https://academyhealth.org/sites/default/files/friends\\_of\\_ahrq\\_appropriations\\_request\\_fy26.pdf](https://academyhealth.org/sites/default/files/friends_of_ahrq_appropriations_request_fy26.pdf)

of the health care system – work that can inform your efforts.<sup>3</sup> The research supported by AHRQ not only improves health but also increases the efficiency of and effectiveness of our healthcare system, saving the government billions of dollars annually.

During your confirmation hearing, you said that you “will align medical research and patient engagement initiatives to end the chronic disease epidemic and make Americans healthy again.” You also told Congress that you will be “working with AHRQ to hear their proposals on how they will make Americans healthy again.”<sup>4</sup> The elimination of the Agency or its staff would undermine the promises you made to the Senate Finance Committee.

We ask that you immediately reverse any planned cancellation of federally appropriated and lifesaving research at AHRQ, and work in a bipartisan manner with Congress and research stakeholders in any reforms of this lawfully appropriated Agency.

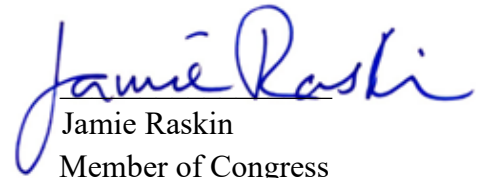
Sincerely,



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senate



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

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<sup>3</sup> Haiman, Madison. Caplan, Josh. “Secretary Kennedy: You Cannot Spell MAHA Without AHRQ”. AcademyHealth Blog. February 20, 2025. <https://academyhealth.org/blog/2025-02/secretary-kennedy-you-cannot-spell-maha-without-ahrq#:~:text=Newly%20sworn%20in%20Health%20and,tool%20for%20achieving%20his%20vision>.

<sup>4</sup> Questions for the Record. Hearing to consider the nomination of Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., of California, to be Secretary of Health and Human Services. January 29, 2025. [https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/responses\\_to\\_questions\\_for\\_the\\_record\\_to\\_robert\\_f\\_kennedy\\_jrpart2.pdf](https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/responses_to_questions_for_the_record_to_robert_f_kennedy_jrpart2.pdf)