



March 10, 2022

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman, House Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo  
Chair, Health Subcommittee  
House Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris  
Rodgers  
Ranking Member, House Energy &  
Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Brett Guthrie  
Ranking Member Health Subcommittee  
House Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, Chairwoman Eshoo, and Ranking Member Guthrie:

As you know, for more than thirty years, NBCC has helped shape policy and successfully advocated for system changes that would further our mission to end breast cancer. NBCC's systems-oriented approach and national network of grassroots advocates allow it to play a qualitatively different role than other breast cancer advocacy organizations. NBCC provides a mission-driven voice to research, healthcare, and advocacy that has accelerated the goal of ending breast cancer. We are proud to work with you as a valuable partner in these efforts.

I write to again thank you for your leadership in the medical research arena by introducing H.R. 5585, The ARPA-H Act. This bill authorizes the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) as a new research entity within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS.) This legislation recognizes that to meet the ambitious goals set out for ARPA-H, it will take something wholly different from the excellent public and private capabilities that we already have for basic research and healthcare.

To succeed, NBCC believes that we must foster innovation that pierces both technical and institutional barriers to create new capabilities and recognize new breakthroughs. We support the concept of a reimagined medical research entity, ARPA-H, but it should be modeled as close as is possible to DARPA to be successful. Specifically, ARPA-H should:

- Be independent of the National Institutes of Health
- "Report" directly to a cabinet-level agency
- Have its own budget

- Consider leadership outside the world of biomedical research and focus on creating breakthrough capabilities
- Include lay advocates at all levels of leadership and decision-making.

This model is completely different from the government's longstanding approach to disbursing grants for basic research, which successfully serves the vital goal of generating new knowledge. ARPA-H has the distinct purpose of applying knowledge to benefit lives. This requires that ARPA-H have the freedom to take bold approaches and tolerate failure to reap the benefits of new discoveries.

NBCC supports efforts to establish and fund ARPA-H strategically. We appreciate your leadership in realizing the potential of ARPA-H. We look forward to working with you to make ARPA-H a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fran". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "F" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

Fran Visco  
President