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Testimony from Naïma Moustaid-Moussa, Ph.D., 2025-2026 President, American Society for Nutrition, prepared for the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, on NIH and CDC FY 2027 Funding

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chairwoman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Capito and Ranking Member Baldwin:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 appropriations testimony. **The American Society for Nutrition (ASN) respectfully requests \$51.3 billion dollars for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and \$220 million dollars for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/ National Center for Health Statistics (CDC/ NCHS) in FY 2027.** ASN is dedicated to bringing together the world's top researchers to advance our knowledge and application of nutrition, and has more than 9,000 members working throughout academia, clinical practice, government, and industry.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The NIH is the nation's premier sponsor of biomedical research and is the agency responsible for conducting and supporting the largest percentage of federally funded basic and clinical nutrition research. Although nutrition and obesity research make up only about 5% of the NIH budget, some of the most promising nutrition-related research discoveries have been made possible by NIH support. NIH nutrition-related discoveries have impacted the way clinicians prevent and treat heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases. In fact, heart disease was the leading cause of death in 2024, followed by cancer as the second leading cause of death, and stroke as the fourth leading cause of death, with diabetes as the seventh leading cause of death¹. With additional NIH support, breakthroughs and discoveries to improve the health of all Americans and reduce the economic burden of diet-related diseases will be possible.

Investment in biomedical research generates new knowledge, improves health, and leads to innovation and long-term economic growth. **ASN recommends at least \$51.3 billion dollars**

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db548.pdf>

for the NIH in FY 2027 to support NIH nutrition-related research that will lead to important disease prevention and cures. This represents a \$4.087 billion or 8.7% increase over the enacted funding level for NIH in FY 2026.

A budget of \$51.3 billion will allow NIH to provide adequate support for the NIH Common Fund's Nutrition for Precision Health, powered by the All of Us Research Program, while still providing much needed increases to other parts of the portfolio. ASN requests a budget of \$50 million for the NIH Office of Nutritional Research (ONR) to advance nutrition science. The FY 2026 increase of \$5 million is significant compared to FY 2025 funding levels but barely covers the office's administrative costs and pales in comparison to other NIH offices. Given that over 1 million Americans die each year due to a diet-related chronic disease, the case for greater coordination and implementation of cross-cutting nutrition research cannot be overstated. Improving the dietary intake of our nation holds promise as one of the most cost-effective approaches for addressing the health crisis facing our country. At least \$50 million in FY 2027 for the NIH ONR allows the office to guide gold standard nutrition science to treat the root causes of diet-related chronic diseases and drive health and nutrition innovations.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics (CDC NCHS)

The National Center for Health Statistics, housed within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is the nation's principal health statistics agency. **ASN recommends a FY 2027 funding level of \$220 million dollars for NCHS** to strengthen the center's ability to provide accurate and timely health and vital records data to policymakers and reinforce its role as the world's gold-standard producer of health statistics. Despite a growing need for public health data, NCHS has experienced a 24% loss in purchasing power since FY 2010. NCHS needs increased resources and robust staffing to better support data collection and make critical updates to survey content, methodology, and technology. Timely, frequent, and granular data on America's health and health care are essential to guide the public policy decisions that protect and improve the health and security of our nation. With additional funding, NCHS will be able to modernize its data collection efforts and more quickly provide meaningful information to policymakers, public health officials, clinicians, patients, and researchers who rely on NCHS data.

The NCHS provides critical data on all aspects of our health care system, and it is responsible for monitoring the nation's health and nutrition status through surveys such as the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Nutrition and health data, largely collected through NHANES, are essential for tracking the nutrition, health and well-being of the American population, and are especially important for observing nutritional and health trends in our nation's children. This is an invaluable source of data that has been and can continue to be used to address major health issues as they arise. The U.S. Department of Agriculture uses this data to develop nutrition policies and nutrition researchers use this valuable data as well.

Nutrition monitoring conducted by HHS in partnership with the USDA/ Agricultural Research Service is a unique and critically important surveillance function in which dietary intake, nutritional status, and health status are evaluated in a rigorous and standardized manner.

Nutrition monitoring is an inherently governmental function, and findings are essential for multiple government agencies, as well as the public and private sector. Nutrition monitoring is essential to track what Americans are eating, inform nutrition and dietary guidance policy, evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of nutrition assistance programs, and study nutrition-related disease outcomes. Funds are needed to ensure the continuation of this critical surveillance of the nation's nutritional status and the many benefits it provides. For example, NHANES data are used to determine funding levels for programs that support low-income families and children such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Thank you for the opportunity to submit FY 2027 appropriations testimony for NIH and CDC NCHS. Please contact John E. Courtney, Ph.D., ASN's Chief Executive Officer, for further assistance.

Sincerely,
Naïma Moustaid-Moussa, Ph.D.
2025-2026 President, American Society for Nutrition