

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Solve ME/CFS Initiative and #MEAction Assemble 'ME/CFS Advocacy Week' in D.C.

Washington D.C. - Solve ME/CFS Initiative (SMCI) and #MEAction rally patients and their loved ones to D.C. in a week of action to save federal programs for disease research. This week of action, beginning May 15<sup>th</sup>, will be preceded by a week of local advocacy meetings as supporters will meet with congressional representatives across the country starting May 8<sup>th</sup>.

Proposed reductions to scientific programs (such as the elimination of the Prevention and Public Health Fund or the proposed \$6 billion NIH budget cut in FY 2018), threaten critical medical research, especially in regards to ME/CFS. ME/CFS has historically been in the bottom 4% of diseases funded by the NIH, which is alarming as ME/CFS affects more people than HIV/AIDS and Multiple Sclerosis combined. The mission of ME/CFS advocacy week is to raise awareness about ME/CFS, garner support to find a cure, and fight to preserve and grow the few federal ME/CFS research programs still in existence.

SMCI and #MEAction will hold a congressional briefing MAY 18<sup>th</sup>

Speakers-

**Jennifer Brea:** Director of award-winning [Unrest](#), TED Fellow and #MEAction Co-founder

**Carol Head:** MBA Stanford University, CEO of the Solve ME/CFS Initiative

**Dr. Zaher Nahle:** PhD, MPA, Harvard University, Chief Scientific Officer and VP For Research of the Solve ME/CFS Initiative:

Noon to 1:30 pm  
Capitol Visitors Center  
Room SVC-201

The symptoms of ME/CFS include unrelenting physical and mental fatigue, post-exertional malaise, debilitating pain, cognitive and sleep dysfunction and severe immune abnormalities. The economic impact of ME/CFS is catastrophic. The costs due to job loss, disability, medications and medical services for as many as 2.5 American million patients and their families is estimated to cost society \$17 to 24 billion annually. Without funding for research, diagnosis and effective treatment, these costs have a significant, long-term impact in the U.S.

Patients and leaders, including filmmaker Jennifer Brea and Solve ME/CFS Initiative CEO Carol Head, will be **available on Capitol Hill on Wednesday May 17<sup>th</sup> to take interviews and questions:**

421 Cannon House Office Building  
27 Independence Ave SE

Washington DC, 20003

**ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS:**

The **Solve ME/CFS Initiative** is the leading national organization exclusively dedicated to biomedical research and federal policy work for ME/CFS. SMCI envisions a world free of ME/CFS and works steadfastly to make this disease understood, diagnosable, and treatable. SMCI is the only ME/CFS organization with a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator.

**#MEAction** is an international network of patients empowering each other to fight for health equality for Myalgic Encephalomyelitis aka ME/CFS. #MEAction is a grassroots organization and platform designed to empower patients advocates and organizations, wherever they might be, with the technological tools and training to do what they are already doing – better.