

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you provide \$15.4 million for the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This increase from the longstanding \$5.4 million annual appropriation is necessary to adjust for inflation, expand research into broader causes, and strengthen ongoing efforts that have proven effective in advancing our understanding of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS).

The economic and workforce impact of ME/CFS is profound. ME/CFS affects an estimated 1 to 2.5 million Americans, with a significant portion unable to maintain employment due to debilitating symptoms. The financial burden extends beyond affected individuals to their families, employers, and the broader economy. Current estimates place the economic impact of ME/CFS between \$149 billion and \$362 billion annually in lost productivity and medical expenses. Addressing this condition through sustained and expanded research efforts is a fiscally responsible investment that will reduce long-term costs associated with disability, unemployment, and healthcare utilization.

Since its establishment, the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Program at the CDC has made great strides in medical education, epidemiological studies, and public health initiatives. The program has been instrumental in increasing awareness, developing diagnostic criteria, and improving healthcare provider training to better identify and manage ME/CFS cases. However, its funding has remained stagnant at \$5.4 million—an amount that, if the program was adjusted for inflation, would now exceed \$254 million. An increase in funding is critical to sustain and expand these vital efforts.

With the additional funding, the CDC can:

- Expand research beyond infectious triggers to include vaccine reactions, environmental exposures, head injuries, and other potential causes of ME/CFS.
- Enhance national surveillance efforts to better understand the prevalence and risk factors associated with ME/CFS.
- Improve medical education programs to equip healthcare professionals with the necessary tools to diagnose and treat ME/CFS effectively.

- Support the development of treatment strategies aimed at restoring workforce participation and reducing long-term economic burdens.

We urge your support for this request to ensure continued progress in ME/CFS research and public health initiatives. Investing in the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Program will help restore economic productivity, alleviate financial strain on affected families, and ultimately reduce the long-term costs associated with this debilitating condition.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



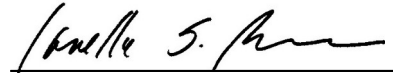
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



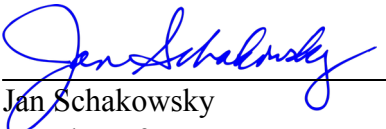
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