

September 8, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

We, the undersigned organizations, representing health care providers, public health leaders, medical researchers, and the patients that benefit from their work, urge you to oppose S. 1347, the “Conference Accountability Act of 2014,” which was reported out of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on July 30, 2014. We also strongly urge you to resist placing it on the Senate calendar for floor consideration.

This legislation would place harmful restrictions on medical and scientific meetings that would threaten scientific progress and increase federal expenditures on unnecessary administrative and reporting requirements. Federal support for, and participation in, scientific meetings has dramatically decreased over the last several years due to federal budget constraints and other policies enacted by the White House Office of Management and Budget. The proposed additional restrictions would further handicap research, implementation and collaborative efforts necessary to address serious public health threats and advance discovery of life saving treatments and diagnostics. National and international meetings play a critical role in the scientific process and in the implementation of scientific advances by allowing for analytical discussion and interaction between government experts and other physicians and scientists in addition to supporting the education and mentoring of junior researchers and physicians—which is severely limited by video conferences and other virtual meeting alternatives.

Furthermore, the prohibitions and requirements proposed in S. 1347 threaten our nation’s leadership and investment in science and research globally. We have witnessed the evolution of medical and scientific innovation globally through the information sharing, mentoring, and professional collaboration that occurs between U.S. scientists and their colleagues from around the world at these meetings.

We share the goal of promoting accountability and transparency in government spending and stand ready to assist in this effort without diminishing the federal investment in medical research and our ability to effectively facilitate and share new knowledge leading to lifesaving vaccines, diagnostics and treatments—the ultimate goals of our investments. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Kimberly Miller at the HIV Medicine Association. She can be reached at either kmiller@hivma.org or (703) 740-4957.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry
Academy of Radiology Research

AcademyHealth
Acoustical Society of America

AIDS Alabama
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
AIDS Policy Project
Alliance for Aging Research
Alpha-1 Foundation
American Academy of HIV Medicine
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Academy of Periodontology
American Aging Association
American Association for Dental Research
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Neurological Surgeons
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
American Brain Coalition
American College of Chest Physician
American College of Preventive Medicine
American College of Preventive Medicine
American College of Prosthodontists
American Epilepsy Society
American Heart Association
American Lung Association
American Neurological Association
American Physiological Society
American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Society for Investigative Pathology
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Nutrition
American Society for Pharmacology & Experimental Therapeutics
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
American Society of Addiction Medicine
American Society of Clinical Oncology
American Society of Dermatopathology
American Society of Hematology
American Society of Nephrology
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
American Thoracic Society
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Clinical and Translational Science
Association for Molecular Pathology
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Independent Research Institutes
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
AVAC:Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention
Biophysical Society
Campaign for Public Health Foundaiton
Coalition for Clinical and Translational Science
Congress of Neurological Surgeons
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)
Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH)
COPD Foundation
Cure Alzheimer's Fund
CurePSP - Foundation for PSP | CBD & Related Brain Diseases
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Rsearch (FIAR)
Friends of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (FNIDCR)
Friends of VA Medical Care and Health Research
GBS/CIDP Foundation International
Genetics Society of America
Global Health Council
Health GAP (Global Access Project)
Hepatitis Education Project
HIV Medicine Association
HIV Prevention Justice Alliance
Hosted Payload Alliance
Housing Works, Inc.
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society
IDSA Center for Global Health Policy
IEEE-USA
Infectious Diseases Society of America

Institute of Nuclear Materials Management
International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
International Essential Tremor Foundation
International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies
Lifelong
Los Angeles LGBT Center
M-CM Network
MdDS Balance Disorder Foundation
NAPHSIS-National Association for Public Health
Statistics and Information Systems
National Alliance for Eye and Vision Research
National Alopecia Areata Foundation
National Association of County and City Health
Officials
National Association of State Head Injury
Administrators
National Disease Research Interchange
National Minority AIDS Council
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy
Parkinson's Action Network

Population Association of America/Association of
Population Centers
Population Association of America/Association of
Population Centers
Project Inform
Pulmonary Hypertension Association
Research!America
San Francisco AIDS Foundation
Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Alliance of
America
Scleroderma Foundation
Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine
Society for Women's Health Research
The American Association of Immunologists
The American Society for Cell Biology
The Clinical Research Forum
The Coalition for the Life Sciences
The Marfan Foundation
The Optical Society
The Sturge-Weber Foundation
Timothy O'Connor RN, MSN, PMC, PhD(c), LNHA
Treatment Action Group