



Alliance for Taxpayer Access

www.taxpayeraccess.org

January 18, 2012

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S House of Representatives
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

On behalf of the Alliance for Taxpayer Access, a coalition of more than 100 patient groups, physicians, researchers, educational institutions, publishers and health promotion organizations that support barrier-free access to taxpayer-funded research, I am writing to express strong opposition to H.R. 3699, the Research Works Act.

H.R.3699 would repeal the successful National Institutes of Health (NIH) Public Access Policy, which currently ensures that the results of our nation's \$29 billion annual investment in biomedical research reach the broadest possible audience. It would also prohibit any other federal agency from enacting similar policies, stifling our nation's ability to effectively leverage our investment in scientific research.

The NIH Public Access Policy has a proven track record of delivering positive benefits to the public, while holding the government accountable for public investment in scientific research. It provides access to more than a half a million individual users each day, including health care professionals, patients, caregivers and their families. These users rely on the accessibility of this information to improve their understanding of the medical conditions they are facing as well as their quality of care.

As of today, the NIH's publicly accessible database, PubMed Central, contains more than 115,000 articles on hypertension research, 150,000 on diabetes research, and more than 110,000 on heart disease research. As citizens whose tax dollars underwrite this research, we have a right to expect that crucial details of the most recent medical advancements in these areas are made available to us, and to the doctors and caregivers whose responsibilities are the health and long life of all Americans.

H.R. 3699 will affect access to not only these vital biomedical research results stemming from NIH funding, but also scientific research underwritten by **all** other federal agencies. Access to critical information on energy, the environment, climate change, and hundreds of other areas that

directly impact the lives and well being of the public would be unfairly limited by this proposed legislation.

At a time when lawmakers should be focused on improving the economy and ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent wisely, H.R. 3699 does exactly the opposite. It imposes restrictions on access to peer-reviewed research results that benefit one small sector of an industry, rather than encourage their use by the widest possible audience.

Our federal government funds research with the expectation that the resulting ideas and discoveries will propel science, stimulate the economy and improve the lives of all Americans. Public support for science is enhanced when the public can directly see the benefits from our investment in scientific research. Scientific progress depends on the broadest possible dissemination of knowledge, and the ability to build upon the work of others.

Given the success of the NIH policy, the Alliance for Taxpayer Access strongly opposes H.R. 3699, the Research Works Act. We look forward to working with you to ensure that the NIH Public Policy continues to serve science, the research community and the public, and that similar policies can be enacted across all federal science agencies.

Thank you for considering our views. Please contact me if you need further information on our long-standing commitment to the success of crucial public access policies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

Heather Joseph
Spokesperson
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heather@arl.org



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Action to Cure Kidney Cancer - NY
AIDS Action Baltimore - MD
AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition - NY
American Association of Law Libraries - DC
American Library Association - DC
American Medical Student Association - VA
Amherst College Library – MA
Anaheim Public Library System, Central Branch - CA
Appalachian State University Library - NC
Arthritis Foundation - DC
Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum - DC
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries - WA
Association of Cancer Online Resources - NY
Association of College & Research Libraries - IL
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs - DC
Association of Research Libraries - DC
Association of Southeastern Research Libraries - GA
Autism Speaks (formerly National Alliance for Autism Research) - DC
Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease and Congenital Hepatic Fibrosis Alliance (ARPKD/CHF Alliance) - PA
Barth Syndrome Foundation - FL
Boston College Libraries - MA
Boston Library Consortium - MA
Bowdoin College Library - ME
Bowling Green State University Libraries - OH
Breast Cancer Network of Strength - IL
Carnegie Mellon University Libraries - PA
CFIDS Association of America - NC
Chemists Without Borders - Canada
Chordoma Foundation - NC
Christopher Reeve Foundation - DC
Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Library and Archives - NY
Colorectal Cancer Coalition - DC
Committee for Economic Development - DC
CUNY – City College Libraries - NY
CURE – Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy - IL
Cutaneous Lymphoma Foundation (formerly Mycosis Fungoides Foundation) - MI
Coalition for Heritable Disorders of Connective Tissue - DC
Colorado State University - CO
Conquer Fragile X Syndrome - FL
The Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) Foundation - OH
Cystinosis Research Network - IL
Denison University – William H. Doane Library - OH
Down Syndrome Treatment and Research Foundation - CA
Eastern Kentucky University Libraries - KY
Electronic Frontier Foundation - CA
Emory University Libraries - GA
Essential Action - DC
Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered (FORCE) - FL
Francis Countway Library of Medicine (Harvard Medical School) - MA
FreePatentsOnline
Genetic Alliance - DC
Global Neuroscience Initiative Foundation - WA
Grand Valley State University Libraries - MI
GNU EPrints - UK
Greater Western Library Alliance - MO
International Mosaic Down Syndrome Association (IMDSA) - TX
International Journal of Medical Sciences - MD
IP Justice - CA
IsoDicentric 15 Exchange, Advocacy and Support (IDEAS) - OR
Kent State University Libraries - OH
Knowledge Ecology International - DC
Linda Hall Library of Science, Engineering & Technology - MO
Loyola University Chicago Libraries - IL
Medical Education Online - MI
Memorial Library, Berry College - GA
National Coalition for PKU & Allied Disorders - MA
National Fragile X Foundation - MI
National Tay-Sachs & Allied Diseases Association - MA
New England Biolabs - MA
Oberlin College - OH
Ohio Library and Information Network - OH
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy - OH
Planetree - CT
Polio Survivors Association - CA
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association - FL
Pseudoxanthoma Elasticum (PXE) International - DC
Public Knowledge - DC
Public Library of Science - CA
Pseudoxanthoma Elasticum (PXE) International - DC
Purdue University Libraries - IN
Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC) - DC
South Dakota State University, Hilton M. Briggs Library - SD
Special Libraries Association - VA
Spina Bifida Association of America - DC
Students for Free Culture - FL
Swarthmore College - PA
Tourette Syndrome Association - DC

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Trinity University Coates Library - TX
Tufts University Libraries - MA
Turner Syndrome Foundation, Inc. - NJ
Universities Allied for Essential Medicines - NJ
University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries - CO
University of Connecticut Libraries - CT
University of Kansas - KS
University of New Hampshire – NH
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of
Information and Library Science - NC

University of Wisconsin – Madison Libraries - WI
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh – Forrest R. Polk
Library - WI
Utah Academic Library Consortium - UT
Veterinary Information Network - CA
Washington State Board for Community and technical
Colleges - WA
Wayne State University College of Nursing - MI
Williams College Libraries - MA
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization - IL