

March 31, 2016

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn, Chairman  
The Honorable Jan Schakowsky, Ranking Member  
Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blackburn and Ranking Member Schakowsky,

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the Association of American Universities (AAU), and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) have significant concerns about reports that the Select Investigative Panel intends to issue subpoenas to compel organizations to release the identities and other personal information not only of researchers but also of graduate students and trainees, health care providers, and administrative and support staff, whether or not they have had significant involvement with research that utilizes human fetal tissue. These requests appear to go beyond the Panel's stated scope of "relevant matters with respect to fetal tissue procurement."

Initial requests sent to our member institutions failed to articulate why information that identified individuals was being requested and how the Panel intended to use this information. No assurances were provided to institutions that the Panel would institute any measures to ensure that this information would be safeguarded. At a hearing earlier this month, we note that questions about the necessity of collecting this information and the safeguards in place to protect the privacy of these individuals went unanswered.

Many scientists and physicians are deeply concerned for their safety and that of their patients, colleagues, and students in light of inflammatory statements and reports surrounding fetal tissue donation. We are troubled that this information is being sought without any rules or process in place to govern how the Panel will use and protect personally identifiable and other sensitive information. Meanwhile, we note that the Panel has offered assurances to others who voluntarily provide information to the Panel that "all personal information ... will be kept in strict confidence."

The AAMC is a not-for-profit association dedicated to transforming health care through innovative medical education, cutting-edge patient care, and groundbreaking medical research. Its members comprise all 145 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools; nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems; and more than 80 academic societies. Through these institutions and organizations, the AAMC serves the leaders of America's medical schools and teaching hospitals and their 148,000 faculty members, 83,000 medical students, and 115,000 resident physicians.

AAU is a not-for-profit organization of 62 leading public and private research universities in the United States and Canada. AAU member universities are on the leading edge of innovation, scholarship, and solutions that contribute to the nation's economy, security, and well-being. The 60 AAU universities in the United States award nearly one-half of all U.S. doctoral degrees and 55 percent of those in the

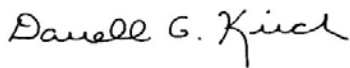
sciences and engineering. AAU works to maintain the productive partnership between the nation's research universities and the federal government.

APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization representing 235 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations. Founded in 1887, APLU is North America's oldest higher education association with member institutions in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, four U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.7 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.2 million degrees, employ 1.2 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$42.7 billion in university-based research.

We urge the Panel to work in a bipartisan fashion to craft rules for how the Panel intends to use this information, and to articulate the specific steps the Panel is taking to promote the security of these individuals and their institutions. In the absence of such rules, we urge the Panel not to compel the release of individually identifiable information. We urge you to allow academic institutions to continue their cooperative engagement with the Panel, providing requested information about practices and the value of fetal tissue research without unnecessarily endangering the safety of those seeking to advance discovery and improve health.

We appreciate the Panel's consideration of these concerns. For further information, please contact David Moore, [dbmoore@aamc.org](mailto:dbmoore@aamc.org), AAMC Senior Director for Government Relations or Heather Pierce, JD MPH, [hpierce@aamc.org](mailto:hpierce@aamc.org), AAMC Senior Director for Science Policy.

Sincerely,



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President  
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Hunter R. Rawlings III  
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cc: March Bell  
Heather Sawyer