September 20, 2019

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D
Director; National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

RE: Appointment of a RN as the Director of NINR

Dear Dr. Collins:

The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) strongly recommends the urgent recruitment of a licensed registered nurse with doctoral education and the appropriate research background to lead the NINR. We are confident that Dr. Lawrence A. Tabak as the Interim Director of National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) is engaged in directing their work, and we appreciate all he is doing for the agency.

Nursing is an autonomous licensed profession with a unique knowledge base and scope of practice in every state. Nurses are educated by nurses, licensed by nursing regulatory agencies, and supervised by nurses in the clinical setting. Nurses adhere to the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses and nurses independently engage in 24/7 surveillance to detect life-threatening problems, then make decisions about how to proceed in the care of the patients entrusted to their care. Additionally, nurses spend many years obtaining doctorates in nursing so they can pursue their own ground-breaking nursing research, sometimes with funding granted by NINR.

A non-nurse leading our elite nursing institution and evaluating proposals for nursing research presents a significant challenge to nursing and society. Unfortunately, some decision-makers do not understand or appreciate the value of nursing. It is important that NINR Research Grant funding be spent wisely and be directed and implemented by qualified nurses. We appreciate your support and recognition of this notion.

NIH has a great deal of influence and authority in directing health care research for the health professions and with the public. Appointing a qualified nursing leader as the Director of NINR at your earliest opportunity will be positively received by the nursing profession and we are confident will serve the NIH, NINR and the public well.

Thank you for your serious consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry S Gallison, DNP, MS, APRN, NEA-BC, CPHQ, AHN-BC
President, American Holistic Nurses Association

CC: Alex Azar, United States Secretary of Health and Human Services
Alex C. Johnson, PhD, Acting Deputy Director for Management and Chief Financial Officer
Michael Gottesman, Deputy Director of Intramural Research
Michael Lauer, Deputy Director for Extramural Research