July 14, 2017

The Honorable John Katko
1620 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Katko:

The American Neurological Association greatly appreciates your support for a bicameral, bipartisan agreement to stop sequestration and raise the spending caps for fiscal year (FY) 2018. Without an increase in the nondefense discretionary (NDD) cap, funding for neuroscience research for debilitating diseases including Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, stroke, brain and spinal cord injury, epilepsy and more could face significant challenges. These neurological diseases impact 100 million Americans every year and cost the United States $789 billion in 2014 alone. And this annual figure is only projected to grow as the elderly population doubles between 2011 and 2050.

As we know you are aware, our nation’s security relies on more than military might. NDD programs not only support law enforcement, homeland security, and judicial activities, these programs also protect Americans from disease, develop a well-educated, well-trained workforce, support our veterans, protect our natural resources, and provide for the basic needs of our most vulnerable. Further, NDD programs support a strong and robust economy at home and help nurture our relationships with developing nations around the world. Such programs have been cut 13 percent since 2010, and are now at the lowest level as a share of GDP since 1962.

The only way to ensure an adequate investment in both defense and domestic activities is for Congress and the President to work together to replace sequestration with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. As with previous bipartisan budget agreements, any relief provided to the Department of Defense must be met with at least equal relief for NDD as both are equally critical in ensuring the security of our nation.

Thank you for your continued support, and for sending a clear message that Congress and the President must begin work now to develop a bipartisan agreement on spending levels for FY 2018.

Sincerely,

American Neurological Association