*EMAIL/LETTER TEMPLATE****Congress
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I am writing to you today to bring a critical issue to your attention… On May 12th and throughout the month of May, patients across the globe will be participating in ME/CFS/FM Awareness Day activities. With millions suffering from these conditions – upwards of 6 million in the US alone – we still have such a long way to go.

Despite considerable evidence of the veracity of these disease, increasing federal and international attention, and a more vocal patient population than ever before, there remain numerous misconceptions and an overwhelming lack of access to compassionate, comprehensive care. Increased federal funding for research is critical to move things forward.

* ME/CFS and FM affect upwards of 6 million people;
* There is no known cause, minimal treatments, and no cure;
* The estimated US economic impact $52 billion annually;
* And the medical community ill-prepared to provide care.

There are many reports and resources that highlight the importance of this urgent medical need:

* Institute of Medicine's landmark report and accompanying physicians guide [Report Guide for Clinicians, *Beyond ME/CFS Redefining an Illness*](https://www.nap.edu/html/19012/MECFScliniciansguide.pdf)
* [Trans-NIH ME/CFS Working Group](https://www.nih.gov/research-training/medical-research-initiatives/mecfs), which identifies shared areas of interest and challenges to advance ME/CFS research by providing evidence-based rationales for supporting ME/CFS research and attracting investigators to study this complex illness.
* FDA [Voice of the Patient Document on ME/CFS](https://www.fda.gov/downloads/ForIndustry/UserFees/PrescriptionDrugUserFee/UCM368806.pdf) which summarizes perspectives from patients concerning their ME/CFS, its impact on their daily life, and currently available therapies.
* FDA [Voice of the Patient Document on Fibromyalgia](https://www.fda.gov/downloads/forindustry/userfees/prescriptiondruguserfee/ucm422351.pdf) which summarizes perspectives from patients concerning their Fibromyalgia, its impact on their daily life, and currently available therapies.
* NIH Director's Blog article, [*Moving Toward Answers in ME/CFS*](https://directorsblog.nih.gov/2017/03/21/moving-toward-answers-in-mecfs/)

I know your time is valuable and your schedule full, yet I urge you to take some time to familiarize yourself with the issue and these resources. I hope they will compel you to support any effort to increase research funding and support for those who suffer with ME/CFS and FM. Millions of patients are counting on you!