

# Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB) Restart



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# SMRB Background

- **Authorization:** NIH Reform Act of 2006
  - Required by 42 U.S.C. 281(e), section 401(e) of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, as amended (**NIH Reform Act of 2006**)
  - SMRB is governed by the provisions of the **Federal Advisory Committee Act**, as amended (5 U.S.C. §§ 1001-1014)
- **Purpose:** To advise NIH and HHS officials on the use of agency organizational authorities to:
  - Establish or abolish Institutes and Centers (ICs)
  - Reorganize offices within NIH Office of the Director
  - Reorganize within and across ICs

# SMRB Background (cont.)

- **History:**
  - SMRB developed a framework for the consideration of organizational change
  - Notable Recommendations: National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences creation, merger of National Institute on Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
  - Last met in 2015
  - Previous Administration wanted reduction in the number of FACA committees; SMRB was proposed by NIH, but it was never acted upon by Congress

# Highlights of Previous Charges to the SMRB

- **Deliberating Organizational Change and Effectiveness (DOCE)– November 2010**
- Substance Use, Abuse, and Addiction– November 2010
- NIH Intramural Program/Clinical Center (CC)– December 2010
- Translational Medicine and Therapeutics (TMAT)– December 2010

# Highlights of Previous Charges to the SMRB (cont.)

- Small Business Innovation Research/Small Business Technology Transfer Program (SBIR)– August 2013
- Approaches to Assessing the Value of Biomedical Research (VOBR)– March 2014
- Pre-college Engagement in Biomedical Science (PEBS)– January 2015
- Grant Review, Award, and Management Process (GRAMP)– July 2015

# SMRB Restart

- FY 2024 Appropriation's report language:
  - “The Committee directs NIH to **reconvene the SMRB within 1 year of enactment** in order to fulfill its statutory duty to advise Congress, the Secretary, and the NIH Director on how best to organize biomedical research funding.”
- NIH Director felt this advisory group would provide useful input on management/organizational issues

# Statutory Rules and Requirements Regarding SMRB Recommendations

- Not less than **once each seven years**, the Board will issue a report to the NIH Director and other appropriate agency officials
  - Board will determine whether and to what extent NIH organizational authorities should be used
  - Report will provide recommendations regarding use of organizational authorities and reasons underlying recommendations
- Before issuing a report, the Board **must consult** nonmember ICDs, other nonmember agency scientific leaders, relevant IC advisory councils, organizations representing the scientific community, and organizations representing patients

## Statutory Rules and Requirements Regarding SMRB Recommendations (cont.)

- Of the meetings held with respect to issuing a report, **one or more meetings must be directed toward the scientific community and one or more meetings must be directed toward consumer organizations**
- Board **must meet at least five times** with respect to issuing a specific report



# SMRB Membership

- SMRB is comprised of an odd number of members consisting of directors of NIH institutes and centers and individuals from NIH-funded institutions or with broad expertise regarding how the NIH functions.
- Current chair: Andrea Hayes Dixon, M.D., current Dean of the College of Medicine of Howard University
- Current membership may be found at: <https://www.nih.gov/scientific-management-review-board/members>

## Initial Charge: SMRB Restart

The NIH requests that SMRB evaluate the current structure of NIH and propose changes that will enhance the ability of the Agency to fulfill its mission. To address this charge, the SMRB should:

1. reexamine the 2010 SMRB report, *Deliberating Organizational Change and Effectiveness* with regard to ascertain if current criteria should be updated for determining when organizational change should be contemplated,
2. consider recent proposals from the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Senate HELP Committee

## Initial Charge: SMRB Restart (cont.)

The NIH requests that SMRB evaluate the current structure of NIH and propose changes that will enhance the ability of the Agency to fulfill its mission. To address this charge, the SMRB should:

3. reevaluate existing guiding principles for the process of deliberating proposed organizational changes, and
4. based upon these updated criteria and principles, provide recommendations of any organizational change that will enhance the ability of the Agency to fulfill its mission

# *Deliberating Organizational Change and Effectiveness*



<https://osp.od.nih.gov/wp-content/uploads/Report-on-Deliberating-Organizational-Change-and-Effectiveness.pdf>

- **Guiding Principles:**
  - Strengthen ability of NIH to carry out mission
  - Provide environment for collaboration, coordination and interaction
  - Bring together synergies
  - Enhance public understanding, confidence, and support
  - Increase operational efficiency
- **Steps and Considerations**
  - Step 1: Assess the need for change
  - Step 2: Evaluate options for change
  - Step 3: implement and evaluate the change
- **Underpinning Attributes**
  - Transparency, Communication and Accountability

# Spectrum of Options for Organizational Change



Degree of organizational change

Functional ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ Structural

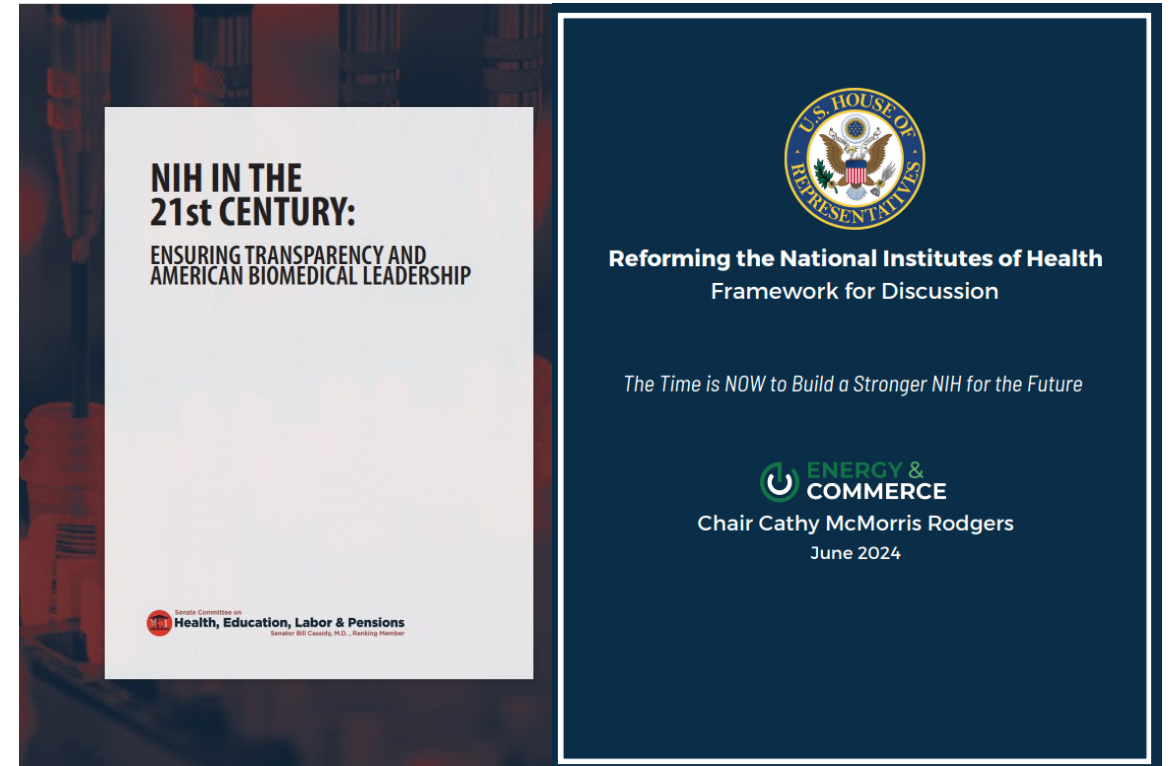
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# Congressional Interest in NIH Organizational Structure

- Proposals regarding NIH reorganization
  - 2024 Reforming the NIH: Framework for Discussion (House Energy and Commerce Chair McMorris Rodgers)
  - 2024 NIH in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Ensuring Transparency and American Biomedical Leadership (Senate HELP Committee Ranking Member Cassidy)
  - Both proposals mention the SMRB



# Major Discussion Themes of November 12th Meeting

- How do we reestablish trust and better communicate the impact of NIH investments?
- How do we increase the impact of the agency's work?
- Prioritizing community partnership
- Prioritizing health disparities activities/research



# Next Steps

- Discuss the group's overall strategy
  - What has worked/not worked
  - Data over time
- Outline key questions and set priorities
  - Tangible metrics
  - Tactical vs “blue sky”
  - Fiscal stability
  - Implementation science
  - Incubator environment
- Establish meeting cadence (virtual and in-person)
  - Schedule a shorter, virtual meeting for January
  - Establish WGs



# NIH...

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## Turning Discovery Into Health

