DATE

TITLE/NAME

ADDRESS

Dear *[Representative/Senator]* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for caring about the future of over 400,000 American citizens with Down syndrome, including my *[daughter/ brother/student etc.]* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, *[NAME of daughter/brother/student/etc]*.

As an advocate for the Global Down Syndrome Foundation, I am writing to urge you to support a request to include increased funds in the Fiscal Year 2018 Omnibus Appropriations legislation for a new trans-institute initiative at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to stop a two decade cycle of decreased and flat funding and will be game-changing for the health outcomes and quality of life for people with Down syndrome.

On October 25th, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services held the first ever hearing on Down syndrome research that highlighted bipartisan support for increased federal investments in Down syndrome research and the need for a trans-NIH initiative to truly realize the full potential of this rich scientific opportunity.  The Global Down Syndrome Foundation testified at the hearing along with witnesses that included Representatives McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Sessions (R-TX) and Bustos (R-IL).  Their testimony urged Congress to make significant new investments in this area that will improve the lives of individuals living with Down syndrome and typical individuals at risk for Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, and autoimmune disorders, among other diseases.  Self-advocate Frank Stephens also testified at the hearing about the value of life and the importance of investing in Down syndrome research.  You can see a now viral video of his testimony here: [**Frank Stephen's Testimony**](https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/OqEiCER1vKh7pNTpvZuB?domain=youtube.com)

This funding request would allow the NIH to establish a trans-institute initiative to study the connection between the diseases that impact the Down syndrome community and those that are the cause of death for over 50% of Americans. Since people with Down syndrome are highly predisposed to, and protected from, major diseases through at least ten NIH institutes this is such a smart and effective way to help our children and adults with Down syndrome while helping millions of other typical people as well. A trans-NIH initiative on Down syndrome provides an opportunity to help us advance treatments and cures for the millions of other Americans who are at risk for these diseases.

My family and I are grateful for all the work that you do for the people of *[your hometown]* and hope that you will support this request. We are here to advocate and do whatever is needed to ensure that this first generations of adults with Down syndrome who will outlive their parents will not live a tragic institutionalized life but rather the American dream.

Sincerely,

*[NAME]*