



## Association of American Cancer Institutes Statement on NIH Director Nomination

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*Pittsburgh, PA – May 15, 2023* The Association of American Cancer Institutes (AACI) commends the Biden administration on its nomination of NCI Director and surgical oncologist **Monica Bertagnolli, MD**, as the next director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The announcement comes over a year after the retirement of longtime NIH Director **Francis Collins, MD, PhD**. Since the departure of Dr. Collins, President Biden has advocated for the NIH nominee to be an oncologist, in line with the Cancer Moonshot and other initiatives focused on “ending cancer as we know it.”

If confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Dr. Bertagnolli will take the helm of the world’s largest public funder of biomedical research. A surgical oncologist, Dr. Bertagnolli is the first woman to direct the NCI and would be the second woman to serve as NIH director.

Dr. Bertagnolli is a strong supporter of increasing diversity in cancer research. In December, she announced her early-stage breast cancer diagnosis, noting that she participated in a clinical trial to develop new diagnostic techniques.

As an association representing 108 leading academic cancer centers in the U.S. and Canada, AACI has worked collaboratively with NCI leadership and the Biden administration. The association is also a persistent advocate for NIH and NCI funding. For several years, AACI has highlighted the discrepancy between the percentage of research grants funded by the NCI and that of other NCI institutes, and the consequences of this shortfall for cancer research.

“AACI applauds President Biden’s choice for NIH director,” said AACI Executive Director **Jennifer W. Pegher**. “We are hopeful that, with Dr. Bertagnolli in the role, cancer research funding will be prioritized, accelerating progress against this complex group of diseases.”