

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2026

Anthony Letai, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Cancer Institute
Center for Cancer Research
National Institutes of Health
31 Center Drive, Building 31
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Dr. Letai,

We write today on behalf of the brain cancer patient and professional community to express deep concerns over the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) recent cessation of funding for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Consortium (PBTC) in March of 2026. The PBTC's efforts in early-stage clinical trials are unique and remain a critical component of a broader campaign to improve care and develop innovative treatments. The end of funding for the PBTC raises many questions related to data integrity, maintenance of efforts, and our ability to sustain progress moving forward.

Cancer remains the leading cause of non-accidental death among pediatric patients, and critical investments and breakthroughs in other cancer treatments have dramatically improved outcomes. Yet, while other cancer treatments see clinical success, brain cancer lags behind and is now the deadliest type of childhood cancer.

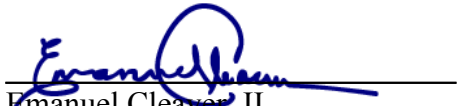
The PBTC has been an incredible resource for institutions including the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (Memphis, TN), Texas Children's Hospital (Houston, TX) and Nationwide Children's Hospital (Columbus, OH), who have relied upon the program's funding.

Please respond to the following questions regarding the PBTC program by May 29th, 2026:


1. What was the NCI's reasoning for ending funding for the PBTC in March 2026?
 - Considering the funding increase the NCI received in fiscal year 2026 congressional appropriations, would NCI re-consider its decision?
2. Will the NCI be releasing any new funding opportunities specifically targeted for activities in pediatric brain cancer?
 - If so, when can the brain cancer community expect information on any new opportunities?

We look forward to receiving your response and are hopeful that Congress' robust support for medical research will lead to much need breakthroughs spurred by transformative NCI research.

Sincerely,



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Sharice L. Davids
Member of Congress