

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Poll: Voters Back Increased Parkinson's Research Funding, Action on the Herbicide Paraquat as Advocates Convene on Capitol Hill

- *More than 350 advocates from 49 states are in Washington this week for the 2026 Parkinson's Policy Forum, urging the federal government to increase research funding, restrict the use of the Parkinson's-linked herbicide paraquat and implement the National Parkinson's Project.*
- *A new national poll finds broad bipartisan support for these priorities, with most saying the federal government should play a larger role in addressing Parkinson's disease and that a cure is possible with more resources.*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 16, 2026) — A [national survey](#) of registered voters released today finds broad bipartisan support for stronger federal action on Parkinson's disease, including increased research funding, limits on toxic exposures linked to the disease and the implementation of a coordinated national strategy to improve prevention, treatment and care.

The survey of 1,000 registered voters nationwide was conducted March 3-5, 2026. These findings come as more than 350 Parkinson's advocates from 49 states are gathering in Washington, D.C., this week for the 2026 Parkinson's Policy Forum.

Survey of Registered Voters: Key Findings

- More than **three in four voters favor doubling federal investment in Parkinson's research.**
- **Two-thirds support banning or curbing the herbicide paraquat**, which scientific evidence has linked to increased Parkinson's risk.
- Roughly **four in five voters want the federal government to implement a national strategy** to improve prevention, treatment and care.

During the Forum, people living with Parkinson's, care partners, researchers and organizational leaders will meet with members of Congress to advance policy priorities backed by the poll results:

- **Increase federal Parkinson's research funding** to \$600 million annually at the National Institutes of Health.
- **Protect brain health by limiting toxic exposure**, including:
 - Urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to complete its reassessment of paraquat and suspend its use.

- Supporting the newly reintroduced HEALTHY BRAINS Act, bipartisan legislation to better understand how toxic exposures and other risk factors contribute to neurodegenerative diseases.
- **Implement the delayed National Parkinson's Project**, a bipartisan whole-of-government federal initiative to better diagnose, treat, prevent and cure Parkinson's and related diseases.

The poll also underscores how widely Parkinson's disease touches American families: **37% of voters say a family member or close friend has been affected by the disease.** Voters also say the federal government should be doing more to address Parkinson's, and **75% believe a cure is possible with greater investment in research.**

Advocates Bring Personal Stories to Capitol Hill

Throughout the Forum, advocates will share their lived experiences with Parkinson's disease, underscoring the importance of policymaking informed by lived experiences and the value of a unified Parkinson's community speaking with one voice.

"I was diagnosed with Parkinson's at 39 while raising my family and building my career, so these numbers and this advocacy are deeply personal to me," said Policy Forum attendee Sara Herrity of Granger, Indiana. "This is my second year traveling to Washington alongside hundreds of advocates to share our stories and urge Congress to invest in research, protect brain health and change the trajectory of this disease. Parkinson's is affecting more families every year, and we cannot afford to wait."

The Parkinson's Policy Forum is hosted by The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research, the American Parkinson Disease Association, the Parkinson's Foundation and the Parkinson's & Movement Disorder Alliance. Representatives from the 2026 Parkinson's Policy Forum partner organizations said:

- "Washington responds to organized, persistent advocacy, and the Parkinson's community has proven that," said Dan Feehan, chief policy and government affairs officer at The Michael J. Fox Foundation. "Every major policy gain we've achieved, from increased attention to Parkinson's-linked toxic exposures to the National Parkinson's Project, happened because people living with Parkinson's and their families consistently raised their voices and pressed for action. The scale of this challenge and the strength of public support make clear that Congress must act."
- "Our collective efforts are making a real impact, but the work is far from done," states Anne Hubbard, chief public policy officer, American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA). "Every day, APDA is fighting for everyone impacted by Parkinson's disease, from pushing for transformative federal research funding on Capitol Hill to protecting access to care, and delivering vital programs and services in local communities across America. Wherever people with Parkinson's and their loved ones are, APDA is there — committed to making each day easier and pushing relentlessly toward a better future."

- “The mission of the Parkinson's Foundation is to take concrete steps today to improve life for people with Parkinson's, while simultaneously pushing research forward toward a cure,” said Parkinson's Foundation Executive Vice President & Chief Strategy and Policy Officer, Andi Lipstein Fristedt. “The need for action has never come at a more critical moment. We're proud to bring the voices and stories of the 1.2 million people in the U.S. living with PD to the halls of Congress and call for urgent action to support those living with PD, and beat this disease.”
- “At PMD Alliance, we build all of our initiatives by first listening to community needs,” said Andrea Merriam, chief executive officer at PMD Alliance. “So joining with our fellow national Parkinson's organizations to raise our voices for this Day of Action was a no-brainer. Congress passed the National Parkinson's Project in July of 2024, but with little oversight and missed deadlines, it's now 2026 and our community is still waiting for the answers and improvements they were promised. We won't be silent while their needs are being ignored.”

The host organizations will also lead the annual Parkinson's National Day of Action on April 7, mobilizing thousands more advocates nationwide to contact lawmakers and sustain momentum throughout Parkinson's Awareness Month.

“As a clinical social worker supporting people with Parkinson's and atypical parkinsonism, like progressive supranuclear palsy, for almost 15 years, I've seen how there is almost nothing as powerful as coming together to make our community's collective voices heard,” said Jessica Shurer, Forum attendee and director of clinical affairs and advocacy at CurePSP. “By working together on Capitol Hill and beyond, we have a real opportunity to foster congressional champions and advance awareness, support, science and policy for all of the parkinsonian conditions.”

For more information about the 2026 Parkinson's Policy Forum and the April National Day of Action, visit www.pdpolicyforum.org.

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About The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF):

As the world's largest nonprofit funder of Parkinson's research, The Michael J. Fox Foundation is dedicated to accelerating a cure for Parkinson's disease and improved therapies for those living with the condition today. The Foundation pursues its goals through an aggressively funded, highly targeted research program coupled with active global engagement of scientists, Parkinson's patients, business leaders, clinical trial participants, donors and volunteers. In addition to funding \$2.5 billion in research to date, the Foundation has fundamentally altered the trajectory of progress toward a cure. Operating at the hub of worldwide Parkinson's research, the Foundation forges groundbreaking collaborations with industry leaders, academic scientists and government research funders; creates a robust open-access data set and biosample

library to speed scientific breakthroughs and treatment with its landmark clinical study, PPMI; increases the flow of participants into Parkinson's disease clinical trials with its online tool, Fox Trial Finder; promotes Parkinson's awareness through high-profile advocacy, events and outreach; and coordinates the grassroots involvement of thousands of Team Fox members around the world. For more information, visit us at www.michaeljfox.org, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

About the American Parkinson Disease Association:

The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to fighting Parkinson's disease (PD) by providing the support, education, research, and community that helps everyone impacted by PD live life to the fullest. Through a nationwide grassroots network of Chapters and Information & Referral (I&R) Centers, APDA works tirelessly to raise public awareness of this chronic neurologic movement disorder and deliver outstanding patient services, resources, and educational and wellness programs to the approximately one million people living with PD in the United States and their care partners and families. Envisioning a world without PD, APDA's national research program and Centers for Advanced Research aim to provide better treatments and unlock the mysteries of the disease. APDA is also committed to advancing public policy solutions that improve lives and move us toward a cure. Founded in 1961, APDA has raised and invested more than \$338 million in its efforts to support the PD community. Learn more at www.apdaparkinson.org.

About the Parkinson's Foundation:

The Parkinson's Foundation makes life better for people with Parkinson's disease by improving care and advancing research toward a cure. In everything we do, we build on the energy, experience and passion of our global Parkinson's community. Since 1957, the Parkinson's Foundation has invested more than \$513 million in Parkinson's research and clinical care. Connect with us on Parkinson.org, [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#) or call 1-800-4PD-INFO (1-800-473-4636).

About the Parkinson's & Movement Disorder Alliance:

PMD Alliance improves quality of life right now through connected community and accessible learning opportunities for every perspective. From on-demand education to local events, our programs meet people where they are with the promise: there's a place for you here. Learn more at www.pmdalliance.org.

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