

Greetings,

On behalf of the National Ataxia Foundation (NAF), the Friedrich's Ataxia Research Alliance (FARA) and the families we serve, we are writing to welcome you to the 118th Congress.

Ataxia is a devastating degenerative disease of the nervous system. Since 1957, NAF has helped Americans living with Ataxia and their families by primarily focusing on supporting medical research aimed at treating and curing Ataxia while also providing vital programs and services for Ataxia families. NAF is the only organization in the United States dedicated to addressing all types of Ataxia and works closely with the world's leading Ataxia researchers, promoting exchanges of ideas and innovation in Ataxia discovery.

FARA was founded in 1998, and is devoted to developing treatments and a cure for Friedrich's Ataxia (FA) – a childhood-onset disorder that is the most prevalent of the Ataxias. Children with FA are, on average, diagnosed between the ages of 5 and 15, need to use wheelchairs within 10 years of diagnosis and die a premature death from cardiomyopathy in early adulthood.

Although all Ataxias are rare diseases, both NAF and FARA's membership continue to grow as more people understand the complexities of this condition and are correctly diagnosed. As we develop ways to identify patients and fund research, NAF and FARA are committed to their long tradition of partnering with Congress on legislative measures which will accelerate much needed treatments to our communities. It is important to note that currently there are no approved treatments for any type of Ataxia.

We are anticipating many exciting initiatives this year that could be game changers for our patients, such as adding "Hereditary Ataxia" to the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), and we are excited to work with you to change the future for Americans with Ataxia. In the meantime, please know that NAF and FARA are always available as a resource to you, your staff, and your constituents.

We are very much looking forward to having an opportunity to speak with your office on Ataxia in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Rosen".

Andrew Rosen
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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Farmer".

Jennifer Farmer
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