

Dear Members of the CIRM Board,

RE: Letter of support for CLIN2 17091

We are writing to you as concerned parents deeply affected by the devastating impact of a rare disease. Naomi Lockard is diagnosed with SPG50, a rare neurodegenerative disorder caused by mutations in the AP4M1 gene. As you may know, rare diseases like SPG50 face a significant challenge in securing the attention, resources, and funding necessary to develop effective treatments. We urge you to consider the lives that could be improved through meaningful funding for gene therapy programs aimed at curing this disease.

SPG50 predominantly affects children, slowly robbing them of their mobility, independence, and, ultimately, their lives. Watching my child lose their ability to walk, communicate, and ultimately even care for themselves is an indescribable pain and is our daily reality. My child also suffers from seizures and has cognitive decline which are some of the cruel realities that those diagnosed with SPG50 face.

This is why I am reaching out to you because we cannot afford to let the voices of families affected by rare diseases go unheard. This could be the turning point that gives families like ours the hope we have longed for.

We request you to recognize the unique and urgent needs of our children. Every day that passes without funding means another day closer to irreversible damage. We ask you not to ignore our child, and to consider the funding a gene therapy in your funding decisions. We believe that the research and trials underway deserve your support not only for the families currently impacted but for the future generations who might otherwise suffer in silence.

We hope that you will stand with us as advocates for the families whose lives depend on it.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and for all the work that you do to make a meaningful impact on the lives of those living with disease.

Sincerely,

**Rob Stern**  
Grandfather

Dear Members of the CIRM Board,

RE: Letter of support for CLIN2 17091

I write to you today not just as a parent but as someone watching their child slowly lose the abilities, we all take for granted. My Grandchild, Naoi Lockard has been diagnosed with SPG50, a rare and devastating neurodegenerative disorder caused by mutations in the AP4M1 gene.

SPG50 is relentless. It strips children of their ability to walk, to communicate, and eventually, to care for themselves. It brings seizures, cognitive decline, and a future filled with uncertainty. As a parent, there is no greater pain than witnessing this slow loss, knowing that treatments are within reach but remain unfunded.

Time is not on our side. Every day without action means another day closer to irreversible damage. That is why I am pleading with you—please recognize the urgent need for funding gene therapy programs that offer real hope. Your support could mean the difference between despair and a future where children like mine have a chance at life.

Please, do not let these children be forgotten. Stand with us in this fight.

Sincerely,  
**Kristin Stern**  
Grandmother