

AAMC Association of American Medical Colleges
AAU Association of American Universities
NASULGC National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges

June 22, 2005

Dear Representative:

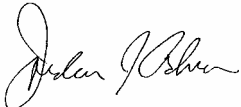
We write to urge you to vote against any amendment to the House FY2006 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 3010) that would eliminate funding for specific research grants supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). We understand that such an amendment might be offered by Rep. Randy Neugebauer.

The biomedical research supported by NIH over the past 50 years has helped make the United States the world leader in science and medicine and has added to the length and quality of life of millions of Americans. Congress has been responsible for providing the resources that have made NIH's extraordinary success a reality.

To be sure, Congress has oversight responsibility for ensuring that proper policies and procedures are in place to determine that these funds are effectively allocated based on sound scientific judgment. The remarkable advances achieved through NIH-supported research confirm the effectiveness of those policies and procedures. By protecting the scientific peer review system, which subjects research proposals to rigorous review for scientific and public health merit, Congress ensures that the highest-quality research—research that contributes directly to public health—is funded with federal dollars.

Some in Congress are questioning the value of research into particular aspects of human or animal behavior. However, the evidence is overwhelming that such research has been invaluable to our understanding of mental health and is essential to the prevention, management, and cure of mental illnesses and disorders.

Eliminating funding of individual NIH grants would undermine vital research as well as the best system for ensuring scientific and fiscal accountability on behalf of the American taxpayer. For our nation's public health, and for the continuing success of the U.S. biomedical research enterprise, we urge you to oppose any amendment that targets individual NIH research grants in this manner.



Jordan J. Cohen, President

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) represents all 125 accredited U.S. medical schools, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, and 94 academic and scientific societies.



Nils Hasselmo, President

The Association of American Universities (AAU) represents 60 of the leading research universities in the United States.



C. Peter Magrath, President

The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) represents 215 public research universities, including 76 land-grant institutions (of which 18 are the historically black public institutions), 27 public higher education systems, and tribal colleges through the membership of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.