



December 1, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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**Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.**  
President

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I urge you to return the FY 2006 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill (H.R. 3010) to conference committee and to support the Senate-passed levels for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Title VII health professions programs in the final conference agreement. The House rejected the previous conference agreement because it seriously underfunded these programs that are necessary to preserving the health and well-being of the American people. The AAMC represents the nation's 125 accredited allopathic medical schools, 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, and more than 109,000 faculty through 94 academic and scientific societies.

When the Senate voted to send the original conference agreement back to the conference committee, it also instructed its conferees to seek increased funding for vital health and education programs, including NIH. In fact, the Senate singled out NIH by calling for restoration of the Senate amount of \$29.4 billion, an increase of 3.7 percent. NIH-supported research continues to improve the health and quality of life for all Americans in dramatic ways. If we are to sustain this momentum and continue this transformation of health, the nation must maintain its commitment to medical research.

The Senate instructions to conferees would increase the Labor-HHS appropriations bill by \$2.2 billion, allowing conferees to adequately fund many essential health programs, including the Title VII health professions programs, which are cut by 69 percent in the original conference agreement. The Senate-passed appropriations bill provides \$299 million for Title VII, the same level as last year, which allows these programs to continue to enhance the supply, diversity and distribution of the health care providers who deliver care in our nation's underserved communities. Eliminating these programs will seriously impair federal efforts to increase the supply and diversity of the health care workforce and provide access to quality health care for all segments of the population.

I urge you to go back to conference and support the Senate levels for the NIH and the Title VII health professions programs in the final FY 2006 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations conference agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jordan J. Cohen".

Jordan J. Cohen, M.D.