



April 30, 2007

The Honorable John Spratt
Chair
Committee on the Budget
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

**Association of
American Medical Colleges**
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Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.
President

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I write to ask you to support the funding level proposed by the House of Representatives for domestic discretionary spending as you negotiate the conference agreement on the FY 2008 Budget resolution. The House Budget Resolution (H.Con.Res. 99) includes a total of \$454 billion, which is \$7 billion more than proposed in the Senate Budget Resolution (S.Con.Res. 21). The AAMC is a nonprofit association representing all 125 accredited U.S. and 17 accredited Canadian medical schools, nearly 400 major teaching hospitals and health systems, including 68 Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers; and 94 academic and scientific societies.

Without an adequate allocation for domestic discretionary spending, Congress will not be able to provide needed increases for medical research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the health professions and nursing education programs administered through the Health Resources and Services Administration, and the healthcare quality improvement research sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). A sustained investment for these programs is critical in our efforts to improve the health and well-being of all Americans. The additional funds proposed in the House Budget Resolution are vital to sustain the research, education, and patient care activities at the nation's medical schools and teaching hospitals as we confront unprecedented health challenges ranging from an aging and increasingly diverse population to the threat of new and re-emerging diseases.

We recognize the multitude of priorities Congress must address in formulating the budget. However, preserving our nation's health must remain a top priority, and the AAMC urges you to support the House Budget Resolution's higher funding level for domestic discretionary programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darrell G. Kirch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.