



November 14, 2007

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

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), I urge you to vote to override the President's veto of the FY 2008 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 3043). This bipartisan bill provides responsible funding levels for vital programs that improve the health and well-being of the American people, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Title VII health professions training programs. The AAMC is a nonprofit association representing all 126 accredited U.S. medical schools, nearly 400 teaching hospitals and health systems, and 94 academic and scientific societies.

As a result of the long-standing Congressional commitment to NIH-supported medical research, scientists are creating an exciting new era in medicine. Researchers nationwide are transforming medical care with discoveries that inform and improve the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of debilitating diseases. Unfortunately, over the last four years, funding for NIH has failed to keep pace with biomedical inflation, threatening to derail the momentum gained from discoveries to this point. These budget constraints come at a time of global competitiveness in scientific research. The \$30 billion for NIH in the FY 2008 conference agreement will help sustain our nation's continued leadership in medical research and will enable researchers nationwide to pursue world-class science.

Further, the nation's health care system cannot function without a well-trained health care workforce. The FY 2008 conference agreement also provides \$212 million for the Title VII health professions training programs, which enhance the supply, diversity, and distribution of the health professions workforce. As a result of a 51.5 percent cut in FY 2006, many Title VII programs were forced to cease their activities. While the modest increase in the FY 2008 conference agreement does not fully recover the funding lost in FY 2006, this level will partially restore funding to the Title VII Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) and the Centers of Excellence (COE) diversity programs and will help ensure that our nation's health care workforce reflects the needs of our population.

I urge you to vote to override the President's veto of the FY 2008 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill and sustain the reasonable funding levels approved by a bipartisan majority of Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Darrell G. Kirch".

Darrell G. Kirch, M.D.