



THE AD HOC GROUP FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

March 11, 2008

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than 300 patient groups, scientific and medical societies, research institutions, and industry organizations represented by the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, I write to request your support during consideration of the FY 2009 Budget Resolution (S.Con.Res. 70) for an amendment by Senators Specter and Harkin to add \$2.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This would bring the total increase for NIH assumed in the budget resolution to \$3 billion.

The NIH supports ground-breaking research that results in new preventive, therapeutic, and diagnostic measures to improve the health and quality of life for all. In addition to strengthening the public health continuum, these advances also contribute to the economic strength of the nation by creating skilled jobs, new products, and improved technologies. An investment in the NIH strengthens our capacity to confront emerging health challenges, while securing the nation's ability to maximize the benefits of scientific opportunity.

For five consecutive years, funding for NIH has failed to keep pace with biomedical research inflation. As a result, NIH has lost more than 10 percent of its purchasing power since FY 2003. The Administration's FY 2009 budget request proposes to freeze NIH's budget at the current year's level. This budget path threatens to hinder the discovery and innovation that propel the nation toward better and new cures and undermines the nation's edge in medical research.

We recognize the numerous priorities Congress must address in formulating the budget. However, we believe that securing the nation's health and well-being must be first among these priorities. The Ad Hoc Group urges you to support the Specter-Harkin amendment to provide additional funds to the NIH.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard M. Knapp'.

Richard M. Knapp, Ph.D.
Chair