



Quality Life Through Research

Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

Member Societies

The American Physiological Society

American Society for Biochemistry
and Molecular Biology

American Society for Pharmacology
and Experimental Therapeutics

American Society for Investigative
Pathology

American Society for Nutrition

The American Association of
Immunologists

American Association of Anatomists

The Protein Society

Society for Developmental Biology

American Peptide Society

Association of Biomolecular
Resource Facilities

The American Society for Bone and
Mineral Research

American Society for Clinical
Investigation

Society for the Study of
Reproduction

Teratology Society

The Endocrine Society

The American Society of Human
Genetics

Environmental Mutagen Society

International Society for
Computational Biology

American College of Sports
Medicine

Biomedical Engineering Society

Genetics Society of America

American Federation for Medical
Research

*Representing over 100,000
biological and biomedical
researchers.*

President

William T. Talman, MD
9650 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20814
Tel 301.634.7090
Email wtalman@FASEB.org
Web www.FASEB.org

University of Iowa
Carver College of Medicine
Professor of Neurology and
Neuroscience
200 Hawkins Drive
Iowa City, Iowa 52242
Tel 319.356.8752
Email william-talman@uiowa.edu

December 6, 2010

Scientific Management Review Board
Office of the Director
National Institutes of Health
Building 1, Room 103
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, MD 20892

VIA EMAIL TO: smrb@mail.nih.gov

Dear Scientific Management Review Board Members:

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) would like to share its views on the pending recommendations of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Translational Medicine and Therapeutics (TMAT) Working Group regarding the proposed translational medicine Institute or Center (IC). FASEB is the nation's largest coalition of biomedical scientists and engineers, representing 23 scientific societies and more than 100,000 researchers. The Federation and its member societies are actively involved in the effort to expedite the development of new therapies, and we strongly support the translational research goals articulated by the NIH Director and the Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB). The proposals put forth by the TMAT Working Group, however, are moving very quickly, and the scientific community has not had the time or the information to assess them properly. Changes of this magnitude need to be carefully considered. **We recommend that SMRB delay its transmission of the TMAT recommendations to the NIH Director to allow for a more substantive dialogue with all stakeholders and an analysis of the potential consequences of these changes.**

FASEB agrees that advancing the development of therapeutics should be a high priority for NIH. We question, however, whether the creation of a new translational research IC is the best way to meet that goal. Translational research, by its very nature, must draw upon the investment in basic research made by the various ICs. It is unclear to us how a new organizational entity will facilitate translation when the fundamental science is supported in the existing ICs. **In fact, the creation of a new entity could delay translation by creating a new bureaucratic structure that is cut off from the research base in the ICs.** The research community would appreciate more information on the role SMRB envisions for a TMAT IC with regard to funding translational research projects and how that role will be balanced with the work already being

conducted by the ICs. Without this additional information, we are not convinced that the expected outcomes justify the cost of the new center or the potential disruption of ongoing programs.

The TMAT Working Group's preferred option for reorganization calls for removing the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program from the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) and combining it with other components of the NIH translational research portfolio to form the new TMAT IC. In addition to being concerned about the impact the proposed reorganization could have on the translational research supported by the other NIH ICs, we are concerned about the effect it may have on the other NCRR resources essential to the nation's biomedical research enterprise.

Before a final recommendation is made to the NIH Director, FASEB encourages SMRB to allow more time for a thorough dialogue with the extramural community and to examine the impact of reorganization on other components of the NIH portfolio. We hope that you will consider input from the broader research community as you evaluate these issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William T. Talman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William T. Talman, MD
FASEB President