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FASEB RELEASES DATA RESOURCE ON NIH FUNDING, “DISCOURAGING,” STATES FASEB PRESIDENT

Bethesda, MD – The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) has released a compilation of data on research funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). “The data illustrate the results of five years of flat funding for NIH,” said Howard Garrison, Ph.D., Director of the FASEB Office of Public Affairs. “We have seen a substantial decline in NIH’s purchasing power, curtailing the ability of scientists to take advantage of new opportunities and respond to new health challenges.”

Some of the other notable trends revealed by the report include:

- Reduction of the NIH budget from \$31.7 billion in FY2004 to a projected \$27.5 billion in FY2009 in constant dollars
- Decline in the total number of R01 grants, from 29,061 in FY2004 to 27,850 in FY2007
- Decrease in the number of applications for R01 grants (down by 1,763 in FY2007, with nearly 1/3 of the drop coming from investigators seeking their first R01)

“I am very worried about what these numbers mean for our next generation of researchers,” stated Robert E. Palazzo, Ph.D., FASEB President. “Constrained budgets, low salaries, fewer grants and “no growth scenarios” are very discouraging for young scientists.” NIH appears to be doing its best to mitigate some of the loss of investigator-initiated research by increasing funding for “competing” R01 grants in FY2007, Garrison pointed out. “However,” he added, “this may be too little, too late. The decrease in grant applications suggests that some scientists are reassessing their career options.”

“These data represent more than tough times for U.S. scientists,” said Palazzo. “What we see is a bleak outlook for our nation’s health because we are wasting the intellectual capital of many of our best and brightest minds. If we don’t change this situation, we will delay discoveries critical to treating Alzheimer’s disease, cancer, Parkinson’s, and other conditions. Those suffering from these and other debilitating diseases should not be made to wait.”

The entire compilation of data, titled “NIH Research Funding Trends, FY1995-2009” can be viewed on the FASEB website at: NIHresearchfunding.faseb.org.

FASEB is composed of 21 societies with more than 80,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB enhances the ability of biomedical and life scientists to improve—through their research—the health, well-being and productivity of all people. FASEB’s mission is to advance biological science through collaborative advocacy for research policies that promote scientific progress and education and lead to improvements in human health.