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**Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology**

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## **FASEB STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT BUSH'S FY 2009 BUDGET**

*Bethesda, MD* – The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) is disappointed that the President's FY 2009 budget contains such discouragingly low funding levels for critical research agencies like the National Institutes of Health (NIH) "Our continued progress in medicine and advances in health are dependent upon our investment in basic research. If this proposal moves forward, it would represent the sixth year of essentially flat-funding for NIH," said Robert Palazzo, Ph.D., FASEB President. "Although President Bush has given lip-service to supporting the search for treatment for diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's and pandemic influenza, this budget again reveals his failure to uphold that commitment. This is an injustice to the patients and their families suffering from conditions for which research funded by NIH is their only hope."

While FASEB applauded the President's continued support for the fundamental research programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF) and Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science, "We reject the premise that funding science in one area or at one agency must come at the expense of another," stated Palazzo. "There is no doubt that NSF and DOE merit the significant increases the President has proposed and we stand with our colleagues in the physical and engineering sciences in the effort to gain support for these agencies. Moreover, we commend President Bush for his championing of competitive research at the USDA. But neglecting NIH at the same time is failing to grasp the interconnectedness of science; rather than capitalizing on the potential medical advancements brought about investment in other agencies, we are leaving biomedical scientists unprepared to transform these opportunities into the cures of tomorrow."

In particular, Palazzo expressed FASEB's outrage that the medical research program at the Department of Veterans Affairs would suffer a cut based on the President's budget. "During a time of war, we have a moral obligation to ensure that our veterans' care is of the highest quality," he said. "The VA is the only agency focused on diseases and conditions that specifically affect the veteran population. Yet the VA research infrastructure is crumbling, medical research at VA has been chronically underfunded, and this is going to negatively impact clinical care. It's shameful."

FASEB will move forward with making the case for research funding to Congress. According to Palazzo, "History has taught us that it is the champions of science in Congress, those who stand up and prioritize the needs of the American people, who can effectively sustain our commitment to research."

*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.*