
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

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**STATEMENT OF FASEB PRESIDENT LEO T. FURCHT, M.D., ON THE
PRESIDENT'S FY 2008 BUDGET**

Bethesda, MD – “On a visit last month to the campus of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), President Bush declared “I truly believe the NIH is one of America’s greatest assets. And it needs to be nourished.” Unfortunately, the budget released today does not reflect the President’s stated support of medical research. Based on his assumptions for NIH’s funding level in FY2007, the President’s budget would provide the agency with a paltry \$32 million increase in FY2008. The President’s proposal stands to cause grievous harm to our ability to combat debilitating diseases, from diabetes to Alzheimer’s, as well as leaving us woefully unprepared to deal with emerging illnesses or pandemic influenza. Far from nourishing NIH, the FY2008 budget represents further deprivation and attrition of this invaluable agency, despite President Bush’s promise that “this government supports what’s happening in order to save lives, and we will.”

The President’s proposal looks far worse when compared to the funding level for NIH in the FY2007 Joint Funding Resolution, representing more than a \$500 million cut from the House-passed bill. FASEB feels strongly that in order to continue the life-saving progress through research conducted at NIH we need to move to a sustainable model of research funding. Flat funding in recent years combined with the force of biomedical research inflation has eroded NIH’s ability to maintain the momentum of discovery that has resulted in dramatic declines in death from heart disease and cancer. Nothing is more important to Americans than their health and NIH is critical to improving the well-being of the nation.

While dealing harshly with our country’s premier medical research agency, the President’s budget does convey a commitment to America’s future through the American Competitiveness Initiative’s continued support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Science. These agencies stand at the forefront of innovation and their science programs spur the technological and medical advancements that will contribute directly to our economic prosperity, world competitiveness, and improved quality of life. FASEB is also grateful for the President’s continued recognition of the importance of peer-reviewed, competitive research in agriculture, as shown by the recommended funding level for the USDA’s National Research Initiative.

It is our sincere hope that Congress will reaffirm their support of our nation’s vital research agencies in FY 2008 for the benefit of all Americans.”

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’s mission is to enhance the ability of biomedical and life scientists to improve—through their research—the health, well-being and productivity of all people. FASEB serves the interests of these scientists in those areas related to public policy, facilitates coalition activities among

Member Societies and disseminates information on biological research through scientific conferences and publications.