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FASEB SAYS PRESIDENT DOES NOT LIVE UP TO PROMISES, LEAVES AMERICA VULNERABLE BY FAILURE TO SUPPORT MEDICAL RESEARCH

“My Administration remains committed to funding research programs to help prevent, treat, and find a cure for Alzheimer’s disease.”

President George W. Bush, November 3, 2005

“America leads the world in medical research, and we are committed to continuing progress in the search for a cure for breast cancer.”

President George W. Bush, September 30, 2005

“Medical research can help us... by developing treatments and cures that save lives and help people overcome disabilities”

President George W. Bush, State of the Union, February 2, 2005

Bethesda, MD – The budget released today does not reflect the promises made by President Bush to the millions of Americans suffering from debilitating diseases, and the countless others at risk for developing them in the future, whose only hope lies in medical research. The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) calls upon scientists, Congress, and the American people to express their disappointment and outrage over the funding level proposed for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for FY 2007.

The opportunity to accelerate the pace of medical advancement cannot be overestimated, according to FASEB President Bruce R. Bistrrian, M.D., Ph.D. “Our previous strong investment in NIH has developed the scientific talent necessary to address the health needs of our society,” said Bistrrian. “The research community stands ready to confront and overcome challenges such as cancer, obesity, and Alzheimer’s disease. It is time to ask our nation’s leaders whether they are ready to stand with us.”

FASEB believes that flat or reduced funding of NIH will serve to slow the rate of research discovery, erode the gains made in the past decade, and discourage the best and brightest from scientific careers. “We are leaving ourselves vulnerable to emerging threats like avian flu, and failing to prepare ourselves for the needs of our aging population,” warns Bistrrian. “It’s as if we can see the tide rising, we’ve already bought the tools to build the floodgate, and are just letting ourselves be engulfed.”

“As the premiere biomedical research enterprise in the world, NIH holds the potential to fulfill the President’s promises,” stated Bistrrian. “It is FASEB’s hope that Congress will show, in the upcoming year, that their highest priority is the health and well-being of the American people.”

FASEB is composed of 22 societies with more than 84,000 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.