FASEB APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF NIH REFORM ACT

Bethesda, MD – “Today marks a positive step forward for biomedical research,” declared Leo Furcht, M.D., President of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), applauding Senate and House passage of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Reform Act. “Our nation will be well served by this legislation, which emphasizes the cornerstone of medical breakthroughs, investigator-initiated research, as well as providing commonsense transparency and sustainable levels of funding for NIH.”

“When nearly every member of the House and every member of the Senate supports a bill, it sends a strong message,” said Jon Retzlaff, FASEB Director of Legislative Relations. “Medical research has always been a high priority for the American people and NIH reauthorization will demonstrate that it remains a priority for Congress, too.”

FASEB is grateful for the tireless leadership of House Energy and Commerce Chairman Joe Barton (R-TX), as well as the tremendous efforts of Ranking Member John Dingell (D-MI) in moving this bill forward. The Federation also wishes to thank Senate HELP Chair Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Ranking Member Edward Kennedy (D-MA), in addition to Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA), for ensuring that the authorized funding levels recommended for NIH are at levels sufficient to continue the momentum they created when doubling the agency’s budget from 1998-2003. “The NIH budget has lost purchasing power over the past four years, and we look forward to working with Congress through the upcoming fiscal years to realize the vision they have outlined for NIH,” said Retzlaff.

“We want all people to live longer, healthier lives,” stated Furcht. “NIH is key to discovering the treatments and cures to the debilitating diseases and injuries suffered by millions of Americans. We strongly urge the President to sign this bill as quickly as possible, and support the authorization levels specified for NIH in his FY2008 budget proposal to Congress.”

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.