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President

Hal Broxmeyer, PhD
Walther Oncology Center
Indiana University School of Medicine
960 W. Walnut Street, Room 302
Indianapolis, IN 46202
phone 317-274-7510
fax 317-274-7592
hbromxey@iupui.edu

President-Elect

J. Evan Sadler, MD, PhD
Washington University Medical School
660 South Euclid Avenue, Box 8126
Saint Louis, MO 63110-1093
phone 314-362-9029
fax 314-454-3012
esadler@wustl.edu

Vice President

Armand Keating, MD
Princess Margaret Hospital
610 University Avenue, Suite 5-303
Toronto, ON M5G 2M9
CANADA
phone 416-946-4595
fax 416-946-4530
armand.keating@uhn.on.ca

Secretary

Charles Abrams, MD
University of Pennsylvania
School of Medicine
421 Curie Boulevard, #912
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6140
phone 215-573-3288
fax 215-573-7400
abrams@mail.med.upenn.edu

Treasurer

Linda Burns, MD
Division of Hematology,
Oncology, and Transplantation
University of Minnesota
420 Delaware Street, SE
Mayo MC 286/Room 14-154A Moos Tower
Minneapolis, MN 55455-0341
phone 612-624-8144
fax 612-625-9988
burns019@umn.edu

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David Bodine, PhD
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Elaine Muchmore, MD
Mohandas Naria, DSc
Marilyn Telen, MD
David Williams, MD

Editors-In-Chief

Cynthia Dunbar, MD, *Blood*
Roy Silverstein, MD, *The Hematologist*

Executive Director

Martha L. Liggett, Esq.
mliggett@hematology.org

The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
2335 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael N. Castle
U.S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives DeGette and Castle:

On behalf of the American Society of Hematology (ASH), I write to offer the Society's strong support for the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2010 (H.R. 4808), the legislation you have introduced to ensure a lasting ethical framework for human stem cell research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and to authorize the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct and support research on human stem cells, including embryonic stem cells. Your efforts in championing this important issue will make a huge difference to the research community in its efforts to find potentially life-saving treatments.

ASH represents over 16,000 clinicians and scientists committed to the study and treatment of blood and blood-related diseases, including malignant hematologic conditions such as leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma. For over 50 years, ASH members have been pioneers in the fields of bone marrow transplantation and stem cell research and have made remarkable strides in developing treatments and cures for blood cancers and discovering how adult bone marrow stem cells and how they could be used to cure human diseases. Today, hematologists are poised to contribute to research on human embryonic stem cells (hESC) that has the potential to lead to the next generation of important therapies for a broad range of diseases. Moreover, one cannot adequately evaluate other very early stem cell types, including induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS), without extensive knowledge of and work with hESCs.

As an organization of physicians and scientists who treat and study blood and blood-related diseases and rely on an inventory of hematopoietic stem cell donors as well as umbilical cord blood units to facilitate life-saving transplants, ASH supports federal funding of all avenues of stem cell research under NIH's rigorous research guidelines. The promise of the field of stem cell research is unmatched.

ASH believes H.R. 4808 is the step that the federal government needs to undertake to ensure that ground-breaking human embryonic stem cell research continues in this country. The Society shares your commitment to use the anticipated benefits of stem cell research to improve the quality of life of our patients. The U.S. medical research enterprise must have access to all avenues of stem cell research, including human embryonic stem cell research, in order to ensure medical and scientific progress is advanced in this area as quickly as possible.

ASH Letter of Support re: H.R. 4808

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The Society believes that the recent injunction halting federally-funded hESC research was based on an over-reaching interpretation of the Dickey-Wicker amendment. This injunction has already had a significant negative impact on hESC research, putting tens of millions of dollars of investment and over a thousand of jobs at stake. ASH strongly supports a permanent legislative solution to ensure that federal funding of hESC research can proceed without additional obstacles.

Please let us know how ASH can help you continue to build support for H.R. 4808, so that it may be considered by the full House of Representatives in the near future. If you have questions, or need more information, feel free to have your staff contact Tracy Roades, ASH Government Affairs Manager, at 202-776-0544 or troades@hematology.org.

Thank you again for your leadership on and commitment to human embryonic stem cell research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hal E. Broxmeyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hal E. Broxmeyer, PhD
President

Attachment: [ASH Policy Statement in Support of All Avenues of Stem Cell Research](#)