



# AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HEMATOLOGY

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**2012**

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Dear Senator/Representative:

As Congress debates the issues surrounding deficit reduction, the American Society of Hematology (ASH) urges you to support a thoughtful, balanced approach that protects nondefense discretionary programs against any further cuts, especially programs related to biomedical research. While ASH recognizes the deficit and the increasing debt the country faces will require difficult decisions, it is also important to understand that federal investment in research saves lives, reduces health costs and strengthens the nation.

American biomedical research has led the world in probing the nature of human disease. This research has led to new medical treatments, saved innumerable lives, reduced human suffering, and spawned entire new industries. None of this would have been possible without federal support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies. The field of hematology has made significant contributions to human health as a result of this support: children are routinely cured of leukemia; more than 90 percent of acute promyelocytic leukemia (APL) is cured with a drug derived from vitamin A; previously lethal chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) is effectively treated with well-tolerated pills; and multiple myeloma has yielded to new classes of drugs. Hematology advances have also helped patients with other types of cancers, heart disease, stroke, inherited metabolic disorders, and genetic diseases.

Yet, at a time when we should be investing more in research to save more lives, research funding is in serious jeopardy.

ASH is particularly concerned about the impact of continued cuts on biomedical research supported by the NIH. After a decade of flat funding, the NIH budget after inflation is about 20 percent lower than it was in 2003. Under current law, the Budget Control Act discretionary caps will reduce nondefense discretionary funding, including NIH, by over 8 percent. These devastating cuts threaten the health of our nation and further cuts by sequestration or re-adjustment of the caps in the Budget Control Act will have even greater consequences to public health, job creation, and America's leadership in biomedical research.

ASH urges you to recognize the value of biomedical research and NIH funding and to commit to a balanced approach to deficit reduction that protects research from further cuts.

Sincerely yours,

Armand Keating