



November 28, 2016

**2016**

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The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
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The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi, and Minority Leader Reid:

The American Society of Hematology (ASH), the world's largest professional society serving both clinicians and scientists around the world who are working to conquer blood diseases, urges you and your colleagues to make fiscal year (FY) 2017 appropriations legislation a priority and to work in a bipartisan manner to pass final, omnibus spending legislation before the end of the calendar year. We urge you to include at least \$34.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as part of this spending package.

American biomedical research has led the world in probing the nature of human disease. The field of hematology has made significant contributions to human health as a result of federal research support: tremendous advancements have been made in the treatment of children with 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.

This is a time of great excitement about scientific discovery; we believe that we are on the verge of very significant breakthroughs that will save many lives, but this progress will be jeopardized by limitations on research funding. Without the certainty of funding in FY 2017, researchers and innovators like those supported by NIH cannot drive progress faster; a missed opportunity that would allow disease to claim ever more lives.

The breakdown of this year's appropriations process and the need once again to enact a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to continue funding for medical research creates inefficiencies, and impedes long term planning by

NIH and the institutions and scientists it supports throughout the nation. Under a CR, NIH typically cannot issue new grants and often withholds funds from existing projects, adding uncertainty to a system that is already under stress. Sustained, predictable, real growth in federal support for medical research funded by NIH is essential for making real and continued progress in bringing treatments and cures to patients.

Members in both chambers and from both parties have expressed enthusiastic endorsements for the life-saving medical research conducted and funded by NIH. ASH urges you to recognize the value of biomedical research and NIH funding and to enact omnibus spending legislation for FY 2017 that includes at least \$34.1 billion for NIH.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles S. Abrams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles S. Abrams  
President