



# AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HEMATOLOGY

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**SENT TO ALL U.S. SENATORS VIA E-MAIL AND FAX**

August 5, 2009

RE: Support the Nomination of Francis S. Collins, MD, PhD, as NIH Director

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Society of Hematology (ASH), I write to urge your support for the nomination of Francis S. Collins, MD, PhD, as Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously approved Dr. Collins' nomination on August 4 and the full Senate may have the opportunity to confirm Dr. Collins as NIH Director prior to the August state work period.

ASH represents more than 16,000 clinicians and scientists committed to the study and treatment of blood and blood-related diseases. The patients we treat have malignant hematologic disorders such as leukemia and lymphoma, non-malignant conditions including anemia and hemophilia, and congenital disorders such as sickle cell anemia and thalassemia. Hematology researchers contribute to the accomplishments and are funded by the spectrum of NIH Institutes, including the National Heart Lung & Blood Institute, National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and National Institute on Aging; consequently, our members care deeply about the success of the NIH.

ASH is pleased that President Obama has nominated Dr. Collins to be the 16<sup>th</sup> NIH Director and that the Senate HELP Committee has unanimously supported this nomination. Dr. Collins is an exceptional scientist and administrator, as demonstrated by his landmark discoveries of disease genes and his exemplary leadership while Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute and the Human Genome Project. Some of Dr. Collins' early research focused on sickle cell disease, thalassemia, and the hereditary persistence of fetal hemoglobin. His research has also led to the identification the genes responsible for the M4 type of adult acute leukemia. In addition, Dr. Collins is an articulate communicator who has written and spoken extensively about the promise of medical research to revolutionize health and health care.

Scientific innovation has extraordinary potential to play in improving both the nation's physical and economic health. Dr. Collins' experience, insight, and vision will be essential in achieving the goals of helping the United States regain its leadership in the area of medical research, expand training opportunities for the next generation of scientists, and stimulate local and regional economies to create jobs.

ASH is eager to work with Dr. Collins as he leads the NIH in this time of unprecedented scientific opportunity, and the Society urges the Senate to confirm him as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Nancy Berliner, MD  
President

**2009**

**President**

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