

# Congress Passes NIH Reauthorization Bill

As one of its final acts before adjourning, Congress passed legislation to reauthorize the National Institutes of Health (NIH). As a result of ASH Grassroots advocacy, the Senate made several important and significant improvements to the House version of the NIH bill. The major change involves providing a higher authorization level for the NIH. The House-passed bill provided for only 5 percent growth per year for fiscal years FY 07-09. ASH expressed concerns to the Senate about the impact of restricting NIH growth - the final bill provided a 7 percent increase in FY '07, 8 percent increase in FY '08, and "such sums" in FY '09. Another significant change concerns how the new common fund will be financed. The House bill required 50 percent of all increases for NIH go to the common fund - the final bill states the common fund growth cannot be lower than the same percentage of overall NIH growth as the previous year.

More information will be available at the ASH Grassroots Network Breakfast today from 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. in the Rosen Centre, Ballroom G.