



December 18, 2019

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20515

Dear President Trump,

On behalf of the American Society of Hematology (ASH), I am reaching out because it has come to my attention that the Administration may issue a new policy that would place the intellectual property of our peer reviewed scientific and medical research articles, published in our Society's journals, in jeopardy. Of particular concern is the potential proposal to eliminate the current 12-month embargo to make federally funded scientific research published in journals freely available worldwide. Such a proposal could significantly threaten the scientific rigor, discovery, and innovation that has made our journal, *Blood*, #1 in the field of hematology.

ASH represents more than 17,000 clinicians and scientists worldwide, who are committed to the study and treatment of blood and blood-related diseases. These disorders encompass malignant hematologic disorders such as leukemia, lymphoma, and multiple myeloma, as well as non-malignant conditions such as sickle cell disease, thalassemia, bone marrow failure, venous thromboembolism, and hemophilia. In addition, hematologists are pioneers in demonstrating the potential of treating various hematologic diseases and continue to be innovators in the field of stem cell biology, regenerative medicine, transfusion medicine, and gene therapy. ASH membership is comprised of basic, translational, and clinical scientists, as well as physicians providing care to patients.

The current 12-month embargo period provides ASH the ability to support a high-quality, peer review system for our journals that ensures the integrity of the research community and scientific communication. ASH editors provide important oversight, ensuring that data are original and conclusions are valid. The support structure for publishing these high-quality journals – a structure that requires 30+ editors, 160+ editorial board members, 3,725 reviewers, and 22 staff – requires resources. Eliminating a 12-month embargo would make it difficult for ASH to maintain its strong peer review system, impacting the Society's commitment to research integrity and authenticity. This would be detrimental to the scientific enterprise and public health.

At the same time, the Society supports public access to important, practice-changing research discoveries that improve our nation's health. For example, clinical care guidelines are made freely available immediately. If patients request access to breakthrough studies related to their blood disease, we also provide this resource to them immediately.

The hematology research community believes that peer review contributes to a healthy scientific discourse and the overall quality of research. In a 2018 ASH survey to more than 25,000 recently published authors, 80% agreed that peer review helps advance science; and most respondents were unwilling to consider scientific communication without peer review.

We strongly encourage the Administration to oppose any proposal that would eliminate the current embargo. Simply stated, the Society cannot support a publishing model that is not economically sustainable over the

long run. We welcome the opportunity to further discuss the impact of this critical matter at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SL', written in a cursive style.

Stephanie Lee, MD, MPH
President

cc: Joe Grogan, Assistant to the President and Director, Domestic Policy Council
Russel T. Vought, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget
Wilbur Ross, Secretary of Commerce
Kelvin K. Droegemeier, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy
Francis S. Collins, MD, Ph.D., Director, National Institutes of Health
Norman E. Sharpless, MD, Director, National Cancer Institute
Gary H. Gibbons, MD, Director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
Griffin P. Rodgers, MD, MACP, Director, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and
Kidney Diseases