

## **BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH**

### **National Institutes of Health**

#### ***Stimulus Package***

On February 17, 2009, the President signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provides \$10.4 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) over 2 years, including:

- \$8.2 billion in support of scientific research priorities
- \$1 billion to support Extramural Construction, Repairs, and Alterations
- \$300 million for Shared Instrumentation and other capital equipment
- \$500 million for NIH buildings and facilities
- \$400 million for Comparative Effectiveness Research [**also see QIW section on CER**]

Economists estimate that the \$10 billion provided to NIH in the amendment could result in the creation of over 70,000 jobs in the health industry over the next two years. Prior to this amendment's passage, the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, of which the AANS and CNS are members, sent letters to Congress requesting an increase in biomedical funding.

With this funding, NIH will focus scientific activities in several areas:

- NIH will choose among recently peer reviewed, highly meritorious R01 and similar mechanisms capable of making significant advances in two years.
- NIH will also fund new R01 applications that have a reasonable expectation of making progress in two years.
- NIH will accelerate the tempo of ongoing science through targeted supplements to current grants (e.g., competitively expand the scope of current research awards or supplement an existing award with additional support for infrastructure that will be used in the two-year availability of these funds).
- NIH has also designated at least \$200 million in FYs 2009 - 2010 for a new initiative called the [NIH Challenge Grants in Health and Science Research](#), to fund about 200 grants. This new program will support research on topics that address specific scientific and health research challenges in biomedical and behavioral research that will benefit from significant 2-year jumpstart funds. "Challenge Areas," defined by the NIH, focus on specific knowledge gaps, scientific opportunities, new technologies, data generation, or research methods that should have a high impact in biomedical or behavioral science and/or public health. The Washington office is working with AANS and CNS members to identify potential challenge grant funding opportunities, including the use of these funds to promote prospective outcomes reporting (i.e., the NeuroPoint Alliance) which will help neurosurgeons refine indications for specific neurosurgical procedures. [**also see QIW Section on Establishing a Comprehensive Neurosurgery Clinical Data Reporting System**]

#### ***Omnibus***

In March 2009, the President signed into law a \$410 billion omnibus appropriations bill to fund most of the government from March 7 through September 30, 2009. Since from October 2008, the federal government was operating under a continuing resolution that funded most Cabinet departments and federal agencies at FY08 levels. The measure includes nine unapproved FY09 appropriations bills, including:

- Labor-HHS Appropriations: \$151.8 billion, about \$6 billion more than FY08 funding levels.
  - NIH: \$30.3 billion, a \$938 million or 3.2% increase (includes \$1.5 billion for NINDS)

- CDC: \$6.6 billion, a \$239 million increase
- FDA: \$2 billion, or \$335 million above 08 levels

Since Congress and the White House completed a five-year doubling of the NIH budget in 2003, NIH's budget has remained flat and in 2009 was about \$29 billion, which is about 10 percent lower in real funding than what it was in 2003. The omnibus, combined with the stimulus package funding, brings NIH's budget to nearly \$40 billion over a two-year period.

### ***President's Budget***

As a member of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, the AANS and CNS applauded President Obama for his vision articulated in the FY 10 budget that “Investments in science and technology foster economic growth, create millions of high-tech, high-wage jobs that allow American workers to lead the global economy, improve the quality of life for all Americans, and strengthen our national security.” The budget specifically proposes over \$6 billion within NIH in support of a multi-year plan to double cancer research. These resources will be committed strategically to have the greatest impact on developing innovative diagnostics, treatments and cures for cancer. Through the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, the AANS and CNS also sent a letter to Congress requesting a \$7.4 billion increase over the FY09 omnibus funding level, or a 13% increase, for all the programs within the 7 major public health agencies. In a separate letter coordinated by the National Coalition for Heart and Stroke Research, the AANS and CNS requested a 7% increase (or \$32.4 billion) for the NIH over the FY09 appropriation representing a first step toward achieving the President's campaign pledge to double the NIH budget over the next 10 years. This would include 7% increases for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) (or \$3.2 billion) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (or \$1.7 billion).

### ***Brain Attack Coalition***

In November 2008, Sander Connolly and Rocco Armonda represented the AANS and CNS at a Brain Attack Coalition (BAC) meeting. This multi-stakeholder group discussed efforts to revise its “Primary Stroke Centers” paper and its “Classification of Cerebrovascular Diseases III” paper, as well as stroke messaging.

### ***Stem Cell Research***

In March, President Obama signed an executive order to lift restrictions on embryonic stem cell research implemented by his predecessor, a move designed to increase the NIH's funding for stem cell research. The executive order revokes a policy set by the Bush administration that prohibited the use of public funds for research using embryonic stem cells created after Aug. 9, 2001. President Obama's executive order will provide scientists access to a greater number of embryonic stem cell lines—and newer, more stable lines—compared to the 21 lines available under the Bush policy. It is unclear exactly how many more lines would be available under Obama's policy. A RAND Corp. study in 2003 estimated as many as 275 lines could be available for research from discarded embryos. The International Society for Stem Cell Research science editors estimate there are more than 800 human embryonic stem cell lines cited in peer review articles, but it is unclear how many of these lines would be eligible under the NIH guidelines as part of President Obama's executive order.