



1901 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 607
Washington DC, 20006
Phone: 202.223.0667
Fax: 202.463.1257
Web: www.fnidcr.org

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The Honorable Barack Obama
President-elect of the United States of America
Presidential Transition Team
Washington, DC 20270

Re: NIH Funding in the Stimulus Package

Dear President-elect Obama:

On behalf of the *Friends of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research* (FNIDCR), a leading coalition of individuals, corporations, and institutions that understands the importance of dental, oral, and craniofacial health to our society, please accept our congratulations on your hard-fought and well-earned election. As you prepare to lead our nation, and as the 111th Congress commences, it is an opportune time to address the need to rectify the insufficient levels of funding appropriated to the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Essentially, for the past six years, NIH has been flat-funded. This unfortunate fact has jeopardized the opportunity to seize upon new discoveries in medical research and has discouraged talented and promising young scientists from pursuing groundbreaking work in this important field.

Therefore, to correct six years of stagnate funding, we respectfully request your assistance to include \$10 billion in stimulus funding to aid to NIH. We contend that your Administration will be contributing to overall benefit of many Americans' lives by providing this amount because such an appropriation will yield a short-term stimulus to the economy and a long-term investment to the well-being of society.

At a public policy forum in November, Former NIH Director **Dr. Harold Varmus**, who you recently wisely selected to be one of your science advisers, made the case that stimulus aid to NIH will provide, in essence, a stimulus to the economy. (Dr. Varmus estimated that flat-funding has resulted in a loss of 14% of NIH's buying power when inflation is taken into account.) Therefore, stimulus aid to NIH will provide a short-term boost that will:

- ✓ Pay salaries of scientists, technicians, graduate students
- ✓ Pay for indirect costs of universities to function
- ✓ Go toward the purchase of supplies, small equipment, all of which are made by US manufacturers.

We agree with Dr. Varmus, and strongly support these salient points.

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In addition, Dr. Varmus stated that government has realized a return on investment in science of 150%, making it a worthy long-term investment. Moreover, from our relationship with one Institute, the ***National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research***, we have seen a long-term payoff of investing in science that has yielded:

- ✓ New discoveries such as Salivary Diagnostics that eliminates traditional blood testing techniques
- ✓ Research that established a clear link between bacteria in the mouth and heart disease
- ✓ Advances in Oral Cancer detection
- ✓ The significant decrease of tooth decay

President-elect Obama, we appreciate your enthusiastic support of science. Although we understand that previous draft versions of stimulus package legislation contained \$1 billion for NIH, we believe that \$10 billion in stimulus funding will provide the foundation for restoring NIH's much needed resources as the world's leader in medical research as we aim for predictable, steady increases going forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Donoff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

R. Bruce Donoff, D.M.D., M.D.
FNIDCR President

CC: Congressional Oral Health Caucus