RE: NIH Final Funding Level for FY 2016

Dear Member of Congress:

As one of your local constituents and an active member of the American Society of Transplantation (AST), I strongly applaud the significant investments approved for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) earlier this year by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.  As a local healthcare professional, I am grateful for the early bipartisan and bicameral support expressed for NIH in this 114th Congress.

As the U.S. Congress continues to develop final appropriations legislation before the current continuing resolution expires on December 11, 2015, I respectfully request your support for an FY 2016 NIH funding level of at least $32 billion, equal to the level approved earlier this year by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee.

NIH is the world’s premier supporter of merit-reviewed, investigator-initiated basic research.  Our country still has the most robust medical research capacity in the world, but that capacity simply cannot weather repeated blows such as persistent below-inflation funding levels and sequestration cuts, which jeopardize our competitive edge in an increasingly innovation-based global marketplace.

The current trend of insufficient funding for NIH has a serious, wide-ranging impact on our nation’s health and our capacity for medical innovation in the 21st century. If we are serious about breaking new ground in our understanding of complex diseases and seeking to accelerate the speed with which new cures, treatments and vaccines are developed, then it’s absolutely essential that we increase funding for medical research at NIH.

While I understand the difficult fiscal challenges you face, I urge you to prioritize the important role that NIH plays in biomedical research and economic growth by working to fund the agency at an annual level of at least $32 billion.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request and for the meaningful impact such support will make in the lives of millions of Americans, including future patients awaiting a life-saving donor organ.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

Member, AST