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the Field of Transplantation

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June 24, 2015

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
US Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Baldwin,

The American Society of Transplantation (AST), representing a majority of the nation's professionals engaged in the field of solid organ transplantation, shares your concern and support for our nation's next generation of young researchers and looks forward to working closely with your office to address the decline in young researchers obtaining National Institutes of Health (NIH) research funding.

Over the past four decades, the average age of a young researcher receiving his or her first NIH grant has increased from 38 to 45, while during the same time period the percentage of research grants with a principal investigator under age 36 has declined from 18 to 3. AST is pleased that the "Next Generation Researchers Act" takes an evidence-based approach to identify and examine these challenges and improve the overall environment for young researchers.

If enacted, this bill would assist young scientists seeking NIH grants by strengthening mentoring programs and assisting researchers in obtaining renewal funding. The bill would also fund a National Academy of Sciences study to identify barriers to new researchers obtaining research grants and make recommendations to address them. The AST supports Senator Baldwin and her work to address the funding challenges experienced by young research investigators.

The AST recognizes the need for greater federal involvement in identifying the causes for the decline in young scientists receiving NIH research grants as well as examining possible policy solutions to address these obstacles.

AST looks forward to working with you to advance this important legislation. Thank you again for your leadership and ongoing support of the biomedical research community.

Sincerely,

James S. Allan, MD, MBA
President

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