



Improving Human Life by Advancing
the Field of Transplantation

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June 23, 2015

The Honorable Richard Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
United States Senate
290 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: AST Support of NIH Caucus Launch

Dear Senators Durbin and Graham:

On behalf of the American Society of Transplantation (AST), representing a majority of the nation's professionals engaged in the field of solid organ transplantation, applauds and commends your recent founding of the bipartisan Senate NIH Caucus. AST was honored to be present for the launch of this important group and strongly supports the Caucus goal to preserve our nation's global competitiveness by highlighting the need for investments in cutting-edge research being performed by the agency – the foremost biomedical research institute in the world.

AST supports your efforts and looks forward to continuing to work closely with you and the NIH Caucus to ensure that policymakers better understand the facts, including:

- * NIH directly supports more than 400,000 jobs across the country, and every one dollar of NIH funding generates more than two dollars in local economic growth;
- * In 2012, fifty-three percent of all funding for basic research came from the federal government. Yet as a percentage of the total federal budget, the federal government spends two-thirds less on research and development today than it did in 1965;
- * Due to sequestration and flat budgets, NIH has lost nearly 25 percent of its purchasing power since 2003, when adjusted for inflation; and
- * At NIH, the percentage of research grants that receive funding has declined almost every year for the past 10 years.

The message that you both stated clearly during the NIH Caucus launch press conference, **“Groundbreaking and lifesaving research simply cannot be turned on and off like a light switch,”** truly captures the essence of the challenge in front of all of us as researchers. Predictable and stable sources of support and funding must be established for our nation to continue to be a leader in the biomedical research arena.

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AMERICAN TRANSPLANT CONGRESS 2016

June 11–15, 2016
Boston, MA

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The Honorable Lindsey Graham
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Again, AST applauds your leadership and looks forward to working closely with the new NIH caucus. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if the AST may be of assistance to you or your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Allan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Allan, MD, MBA
AST President