



SOCIETY FOR
WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

Date: January 5, 2009

To: Members of the Obama Transition Team focused on National Institutes of Health

From: Phyllis Greenberger, President and CEO

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Society for Women's Health Research statement on the critical issues facing the National Institutes of Health in 2009 and beyond. It is our belief that in order to pursue any new research, the NIH funding must increase. President-elect Obama recognized this need when he made his pledge to double the NIH budget. It is also of critical importance that at least \$1.2 billion in funding be provided to NIH as part of the immediate economic stimulus effort and that this funding be included in the base for subsequent budget years. An infusion of investment in the nation's biomedical research infrastructure will help advance scientific discovery and ensure that Americans that efforts to find new treatments and possible cures for many devastating diseases will continue. This investment will create skilled jobs in communities nationwide, which will impact medical schools, teaching hospitals, universities and research institutes where much of this research takes place.

Moreover, the Society advocates that at least part of the budget increase should be spent on funding for women's health research, as well as research on biological and physiological sex differences that affect the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases. A complex combination of genetic, hormonal, physiological, and environmental factors influences health and disease in women and men in extraordinarily different ways. Many differences between men and women are present at birth, though others develop later in life. Diseases such as cancer, obesity, coronary heart disease, autoimmune disorders, and mental health disorders exhibit sex differences in susceptibility, prevalence, time of onset, and severity. Biological sex differences in disease and the response to therapeutics are pervasive and compelling, and the study of these differences promises not only to optimize therapies but also to reveal fundamental principles of major diseases. Sex-based biology has revolutionized the way that the scientific and medical communities study and treat various conditions and disorders.

We ask that President-elect Obama share our commitment to the advancement of such research in his budget and in his shared vision for the agency.

Time is of the essence to efficiently and effectively use our research dollars to achieve maximum results for all Americans, men and women alike.