

December 5, 2013

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN), I urge you to help kidney disease patients by protecting funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) as you consider difficult budget decisions in 2014 and beyond.

ASN leads the fight against kidney disease. More than 20 million Americans have kidney disease today. Of them, more than 600,000 have kidney failure and require life-sustaining dialysis treatments or a transplant. These patients represent less than 1% of Medicare patients but 7% of Medicare costs—a total of \$33 billion annually.

The most effective way to cut Medicare expenditures is to treat kidney disease more efficiently and to prevent its progression. Advances in research supported by NIH make it possible to do just that. Research also allows patients with kidney disease to live longer, more productive lives.

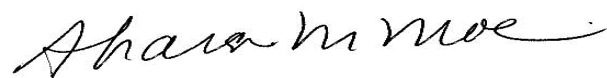
Moreover, medical research is an economic driver:

- More than 80% of NIH funding flows back to states and local communities
- Every dollar spent on research generates \$2.60 in economic activity
- One in 500 U.S. full-time jobs is supported by research

When adjusted for inflation, however, NIH's budget is less today than what it was in 2003, and the percentage of grants NIH funds is at an all-time record low. Besides impeding progress in patient care, the effect is hurting researchers that have had to scale back operations, cut jobs, and in some cases close laboratories and the businesses that support them.

Cuts to medical research are counterproductive and jeopardize our position as the global leader in research. Please help preserve America's preeminence in medical research and ensure the continued availability of the highest quality care for patients: protect NIH and NIDDK.

Sincerely,



Sharon M. Moe, MD, FASN  
President