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Merck Research Laboratories
Ellen Zane
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March 31, 2010

**The Honorable John F. Kerry
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2101**

Example of letter sent to Massachusetts
Congressional Delegation from the co-
chairs of the Massachusetts Life
Sciences Collaborative

Dear Congressman Kerry:

On behalf of the Massachusetts Life Science Collaborative, a broad-based coalition of leaders from industry and academia committed to the growth of the life sciences in the Commonwealth, we thank you for your support on issues of critical import to the life sciences cluster in Massachusetts and throughout the nation. As co-chairs of the Collaborative, we look forward to continuing working with you to strengthen this critical cluster for our Commonwealth.

Last January, we wrote to the entire Massachusetts Congressional delegation underscoring the importance of funding for the National Institutes of Health in any contemplated stimulus package. We are appreciative to you and other members of the delegation for your strong advocacy and for the fact that the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested \$10.4 billion over two years in biomedical research through the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Much of those funds are now at work across the state and the country in the service of better health and a healthier economy. Scientists are using Recovery Act funds to 1) explore scientific strategies that were not possible even ten years ago, 2) build upon the insights of previous discoveries to more quickly deliver new treatments for patients, and 3) improve health care quality by finding the right treatment for each patient, forging a new age of personalized medicine. Furthermore, the NIH has estimated that Recovery Act funds will create or retain 50,000 jobs.

As anticipated by those of us who are part of institutions and companies conducting this research, we have seen tremendous impact in the Commonwealth. For example, at MIT, Dr. Emilio Bizzi is using over \$300,000 of ARRA NIH funds to conduct neural research helping stroke victims recover full rehabilitation of limbs. At Harvard, Dr. Timothy Mitchison is utilizing almost \$1 million to help identify the most likely cancer therapy candidates earlier in the pipeline resulting in cost savings and faster cures. And at the University of Massachusetts, an approximately \$4 million research effort led by Dr. Robert Brown, Chair of Neurology, is designed to sequence the genome of patients with ALS to identify the genes responsible for this devastating—and still untreatable—disease.

Massachusetts **LIFE SCIENCES** Collaborative

These are just a few examples of the 1,328 of projects launched by the over \$500M of NIH ARRA funds coming to approximately ninety institutions throughout Massachusetts this year.

But the potential of Recovery Act NIH funding could be significantly slowed unless those investments are followed with increased funding of the NIH beyond 2010. Attached is a recently released report by United for Medical Research, entitled "Investing in Recovery and Discovery." This group is a national partnership among university and private research institutions, industry, and patients.

The report affirms that while many valuable projects will be completed in the Recovery Act's timeframe, many more equally promising ideas cannot fit into the two-year window of stimulus funding. In fact, even with the Recovery Act infusion, past investments have created such an expansion of new opportunities that the US is not able to pursue even a quarter of what scientists and researchers have to offer. Many new ideas and innovations for translating scientific discovery into new treatments for patients might be lost in future years if NIH funding does not maintain ongoing and stable increases. Today, NIH is able to empower scientists to pursue roughly one in five of the nation's most exciting biomedical ideas. In 2011, if NIH funding returns to pre- Recovery Act levels roughly only one in ten proposals would receive funding. This would be a historically low funding rate and would dramatically and negatively impact the pace of innovation in this critical field.

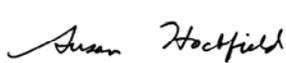
We are confident that increased funding of NIH will continue to stimulate economic activity and job growth throughout the country in the short term, and also advance critical longer term economic interests of the United States by stabilizing our position in the worldwide competition to attract and support the best and brightest minds to biomedical research.

Thank you again for your support and look forward to continuing our work with you on these critical issues.

Sincerely,



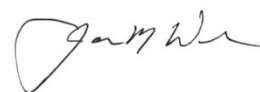
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