



NAEVR

National Alliance For
Eye And Vision Research

Serving as Friends of the National Eye Institute

12300 Twinbrook Parkway
Suite 250
Rockville MD 20852
240-221-2905; www.eyerresearch.org

NAEVR URGES AT LEAST A SEVEN PERCENT INCREASE IN FY2010 NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) AND NATIONAL EYE INSTITUTE (NEI) FUNDING TO RESTORE PURCHASING POWER LOST DUE TO FLAT FUNDING AND BIOMEDICAL INFLATION

NIH Funding

- The vision community commends Congress for the \$10.4 billion in NIH funding within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These two-year stimulative dollars are the first step in a pathway to restoring our nation's biomedical research enterprise. NAEVR also commends Congress for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 NIH funding increase of nearly \$1 billion, or 3.2 percent, as that enables NIH to at least keep pace with the FY2008 biomedical inflation rate of 3.5 percent.
- The NIH lost 14 percent of its purchasing power over the past six appropriations cycles due to flat funding and biomedical inflation. NIH needs sustained and predictable funding to re-build its base and support multi-year investigator-initiated research grants. NAEVR urges an annual increase of at least seven percent, which reflects a modest three percent increase plus the biomedical inflation rate, estimated for FY2009 at 3.8 percent. At least a seven percent increase would mean FY2010 NIH funding at \$32.4 billion.

NEI Funding

- The NEI has lost 18 percent of its purchasing power over the past six funding cycles. Its FY2009 funding level of \$688 million reflects just one percent of the estimated \$68 billion annual cost of eye disease and vision impairment, which does not fully quantify the impact of direct healthcare costs, lost productivity, reduced independence, diminished quality of life, increased depression, and accelerated mortality.
- The government spends about \$2.00 per person, per year, to combat eye disease. Funding NEI at an FY2010 level of at least \$736 million, an increase of \$48 million, means spending a little over an additional dollar for each of the 38 million sight-impaired Americans age 40 and older who experience blindness, low vision, or an age-related eye disease, such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD, the leading cause of vision loss in older Americans), glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, or cataracts. This number will grow to 50 million by year 2020.
- NEI, a leader in the translation of basic research into clinical practice, will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2009 as the NIH Institute that leads the nation's commitment to save and restore vision. NAEVR will initiate a Congressional Resolution to acknowledge NEI's benefits to patients, as well as to designate 2010-2020 as the *Decade of Vision*.