

NAEVR SCORECARD ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Congress Approves FY2007 Joint Funding Resolution Increasing NEI Program Dollars by \$8.5 Million over FY2006

On February 14, just before a Continuing Resolution was to expire, the Senate passed the full-year FY2007 funding Joint Resolution (JR), passed by the House on January 31. NIH's budget was increased by \$620 million, or 2 percent, over FY2006 to a level of \$28.9 billion. The new funding consisted primarily of \$483 million appropriated directly to the newly established common fund (including *NIH Roadmap* initiatives) for

Although the resolution did not specifically increase most Institute/Center budgets above the FY2006 appropriation, the NEI will net an additional \$8.5 million more “programmable” dollars in FY2007, or a 1.2 percent increase, since it will not have to contribute to the *Roadmap*/common fund, which was appropriated directly. As the President's *initial* FY2007 budget proposed to cut the NEI by \$5.8 million, the final FY2007

of \$28.9 billion—a net decrease of \$511 million or 1.7 percent below FY2007 when transfers to other accounts are included. Congressional leaders described the President's budget request as a “backwards step” in ensuring the health of the nation and vowed to champion for “real dollar” increases at NIH.

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trans-Institute research, per the *NIH Reform Act of 2006* passed in December 2006 and endorsed by NAEVR. The common fund appropriation includes a \$91 million increase in the Office of the Director to support new investigators. NAEVR will work closely with the NEI to determine how the community can access the common fund and new investigator funding.

funding level represents a dramatic \$13.8 million more for programs—and demonstrates how effective NAEVR's advocacy has been in ensuring that additional research dollars are available to NIH/NEI.

As the President's FY2008 budget issued on February 5, its proposed NIH funding level of \$28.7 billion falls short of the actual FY2007 NIH funding level

	FY2006 ACTUAL	FY2007 ACTUAL	FY2008 PROPOSED*
NEI	\$666.8 M -0.3%	\$666.8 M 0%	\$667.8 M +0.15%
NIH	\$28.5 B -0.2%	\$28.9 B +2%	\$28.7 B -1.7%

* Programmable level, inclusive of one-time expenses and transfers

Although Defense-related Vision Research is Not Funded in FY2007, Researchers Awarded \$3.5 million from FY2006

Primarily due to jurisdictional issues, the year-long FY2007 funding Joint Resolution did not include the \$50 million Department of Defense (DOD) Peer-Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP) funding that was included in FY2006, the first year in which eye and vision research was eligible. As NAEVR makes its request for continued eligibility in FY2008, the actual FY2006 awards have been announced. In its first year, the vision community submitted 52 of the 651

total grant requests, or eight percent, and received five grants out of 48, or ten percent, for a funding total of \$3.5 million. “This level of funding in the first year is unprecedented, and reflects the applicability of defense-related vision research,” said NAEVR Legislative Counsel John Porter. He added that, for FY2008, Congress has resolved the jurisdictional issue, as this program is now subject to review by the respective House and Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittees.

House and Senate Pass Stem Cell Bills, But Not by Veto-Proof Majority

At press time, the Senate had just approved S. 5, the *Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act*, by a vote of 63-34, following the January 11 House passage of companion bill HR. 3 by 253-174—both votes short of a Presidential veto override. According to Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), a staunch supporter of this measure to expand the embryonic stem cell lines available for federal research funding, “It's one of those bills, you keep trying until you win.”

Full details of the stories on this page appear in the NAEVR Web site's Advocacy Center.