



ASN's Legislative Priorities for 2010

✓ Address Profound Health Care Disparities

- Congress should fund more research to address inequities in treatment of Americans with kidney disease.
- Only 7% of US physicians are minorities. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) should increase support for minority investigators and provide more support to investigators who study disparities in treatment of Americans with kidney disease.

✓ Improve the Success of Kidney Transplants

- When a person receives a transplant, immunosuppressive drugs prevent organ rejection. ASN urges Congress to improve the lives of those Americans who have received transplants by lifting the current 36-month limit on Medicare coverage of these drugs.
- If a transplant fails, Medicare pays for the patient to return to dialysis (\$71,000 annually) or to receive a second transplant (\$100,000). Immunosuppressive drugs cost \$17,000 per year.
- Extended coverage would prolong the lives of Americans, reduce taxpayer costs, and allow more dialysis patients to consider a transplant.

✓ Fund Medical Research that Improves Kidney Health for Americans

- ASN urges Congress to support budgets of \$35 billion for NIH, \$590 million for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Research Program, and \$611 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality in 2011 to sustain ongoing research.
- Congress should include language in the FY 2011 appropriations bill urging NIH to:
 - Increase research on the impact on kidney disease of diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.
 - Fund clinical trials focused on kidney disease.
 - Support the next generation of investigators, including more underrepresented minorities.
 - Fund and conduct research on improving patient care and reducing medical errors.

✓ Fix the Flawed Sustainable Growth Rate Formula

- ASN urges Congress to enact a stable, predictable physician payment system to ensure physicians can provide high-quality patient care and improve health care delivery and outcomes.
- Permanently fixing the SGR formula is vital to protecting access to care for America's elderly, disabled, and military families.

For more information about the ASN or kidney disease, visit www.asn-online.org or call 202-659-0599.