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August 27, 2009

The Honorable Nydia Velázquez
Chairwoman
Small Business Committee
United States House of Representatives
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Small Business Committee
United States House of Representatives
2361 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chair
Committee on Science and Technology
United States House of Representatives
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
Ranking Member
Committee on Science and Technology
United States House of Representatives
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Velázquez, Chairman Gordon, Ranking Member Graves and Ranking Member Hall,

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) is an organization composed of over 11,000 physicians and scientists committed to fighting kidney disease and bettering the lives of their current and future patients. In pursuit of this goal, we are writing to express our support for the House version of the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Reallocation Act (H.R. 2965). We urge Congress to move forward in this process by adopting this legislation, as we oppose a provision in the Senate's version (S.1233, Section 103) that would increase the allocation for the SBIR program of any federal agency budget that provides over \$100 million for research from 2.5% to 3.5% over the next eleven years.

While ASN acknowledges the benefits to be gained by the contribution of small businesses in scientific research, the Senate's proposal will not benefit scientific research as a whole. As a result of the mandatory increase in the SBIR allocation proposed, peer-review research conducted by other organizations will inevitably experience detrimental funding cuts. This research is exactly the kind that ASN's members, as well as a multitude of other innovative scientists and physicians, are performing on a daily basis to improve the quality of life for all Americans. In these economically uncertain times, we do not support a proposal that would limit competition for \$1 billion of federal research money.

Health care innovation is at the forefront of society— scientific research should not be hindered, but should instead be facilitated by all possible means. We recommend that Congress works to increase support for all research rather than restrict it to one type.

We recognize and appreciate the time and effort spent on this difficult issue, and we are fully prepared to support and work with you to pass the House version of the Small Business Innovation Research Reauthorization Act of 2009 (H.R. 2965). If you have any further questions, please contact Paul Smedberg by phone 202-416-0646 or email psmedberg@asn-online.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Coffey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "C" at the end.

American Society of Nephrology (ASN)
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Suite 510
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