

Statement of Eleanor D. Lederer, MD, FASN, President, American Society of Nephrology on Proposed FY 2018 Budget

Condemns the Administration's Proposed Funding Cuts for the National Institutes of Health

Contact: Christine Feheley • (202) 640-4638 • CFeheley@asn-online.org

Washington, DC (March 17, 2017) — The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) condemns the Administration's proposal to drastically cut funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by \$5.8 billion, nearly 20% below current levels. Funding cuts of this unprecedented magnitude would slow research to find treatments and cures for the 40 million Americans with kidney diseases nationwide and delay innovative kidney therapies for the next generation.

In 1972, Congress committed to providing care for Americans with kidney failure regardless of age or income. The Medicare program spends \$103 billion on care for all kidney diseases, and a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlighted that Medicare annually spends nearly \$33 billion on dialysis care for people with kidney failure—more than the entire annual NIH budget of \$32 billion. While we recognize both the tough economic climate and the necessity of fostering sound fiscal policy, cutting research funds will delay the essential development of groundbreaking therapies, increasing future expenses.

The American Society of Nephrology strongly urges Congress to reject these arbitrary cuts to the NIH and defend America's position as the global leader in medical research. We urge Congress to help us finalize the \$34.1 billion already approved by the Senate for FY 2017, and provide a \$2 billion increase over FY 2017 for FY 2018, with a proportional increase for the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive, and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). Given the federal government's unique commitment to care for kidney failure, ASN strongly recommends *greater* investment in kidney research in the form of an NIDDK Special Kidney Research Program.

Kidney researchers funded by NIDDK are on a path to ending kidney diseases, making judicious use of scarce funding—a point the GAO noted. Now is the time to invest in kidney research through NIH to maintain our momentum in discovering

and developing cures for kidney diseases. Let's offer those 40 million Americans with kidney diseases the hope for a healthy future.

Since 1966, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) has been leading the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients. ASN has nearly 17,000 members representing 112 countries. For more information, please visit asn-online.org or contact us at 202-640-4660.

###