

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

**STATEMENT OF AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY
PRESIDENT MARK E. ROSENBERG, MD, FASN, ON FISCAL
YEAR 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET OF \$41.1 BILLION FOR
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

Washington, DC (May 2, 2019) – On behalf of the more than 40 million children, adolescents, and adults living with kidney diseases in the United States, the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) applauds the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (LHHS) Subcommittee for their support of a Fiscal Year 2020 budget of \$41.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), an increase of \$2 billion above the 2019 enacted level. ASN represents more than 20,000 physicians, scientists, nurses, and other health professionals dedicated to treating and studying kidney diseases to improve the lives of people with kidney diseases.

A January 2017 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report highlighted the pressing need for investment in kidney research; GAO found that the annual cost for care of the approximately 650,000 patients in the Medicare End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) program exceeded the budget allocation for the entire NIH. While NIH's budget allocation has grown since that time, we still dedicate equivalent of approximately just 2 percent of the annual total cost of care for kidney failure to kidney research at the NIH.

Since the GAO study was published, the number of patients with kidney diseases and associated costs to the taxpayer have also risen. There are now 720,000 Americans living with kidney failure, and Medicare spends \$35 billion managing kidney failure and \$114 billion managing kidney diseases, 23% of all Medicare spending. Greater investment in kidney research should be an urgent priority to deliver better outcomes for patients and bring greater value to the Medicare program.

As the GAO highlighted, Congress made a commitment to treat all Americans with kidney failure through the Medicare End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Program—the only health condition for which Medicare automatically provides coverage regardless of age. This unique commitment underscores the imperative for Congress to foster innovation and discovery in kidney care.

While the LHHS appropriations falls short of [ASN's request from earlier this year](#) for \$2.5 billion for NIH, with a proportional increase to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), the appropriated increase is a welcome effort to sustain current research levels and keep pace with medical inflation.

NIDDK funds the vast majority of federal research in kidney diseases and is a strategic partner in the federal government's commitment to eradicating kidney diseases. ASN thanks the House LHHS Subcommittee and urges the full House Appropriations Committee and Congress to support this budget for NIH.

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Since 1966, 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 more than 20,000 members representing 131 countries. For more information, please visit www.asn-online.org or contact the society at 202-640-4660.