



President Bush Signs Appropriations Legislation Increasing Funds for Lupus Research and Education Programs

President Bush has signed into law legislation passed by Congress that funds the federal government for the 2008 fiscal year. The appropriations spending package contains several provisions that will boost funding for important lupus research and education initiatives advocated by the Lupus Foundation of America (LFA).

Thanks to all of the hard work of our advocates, the package includes \$3.122 million which enables the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to continue and expand the National Lupus Patient Registry as part of a broader national epidemiological study on lupus. This amount represents a \$2.12 million increase over the amount provided by Congress last year. An increase of this amount is an incredible accomplishment given the cuts in the federal budget.

The increased funding would ensure that the study includes all forms of lupus and all affected populations, particularly African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans who are disproportionately at-risk for lupus. The Lupus Foundation of America will work with the CDC to determine other areas of the United States that would be ideal sites to study these populations.

Expansion of the number of sites is important to determine the true national incidence and prevalence of lupus. Previous attempts at population-based epidemiological studies have been incomplete. Studies conducted in the mid-1980s failed to include Hispanics/Latinos and Asian Americans. Equally important, many earlier attempts at lupus epidemiology failed to focus on all forms of the disease. Specifically, cutaneous lupus, drug-induced lupus and neo-natal lupus were omitted.

The pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries need this important information to make decisions about investing in lupus research to develop new, safe and effective therapies. Also, without this information, it is virtually impossible to accurately measure the true social and economic burden of this disease.

The appropriations package also provides funding for the Office of Women's Health to develop and implement a sustained lupus awareness and education campaign aimed at reaching health care professionals and the general public with an emphasis

on reaching women at greatest risk for developing lupus. This effort will help to improve the early diagnosis and treatment of lupus, one of the LFA's highest priorities.

The Lupus Foundation of America is very grateful for the hard work of our advocates and Members of Congress for this significant accomplishment! We will keep our constituents informed of developments in the ensuing months.

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The Authoritative Source for Information on Lupus

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