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# **BIOPHYSICAL JOURNAL**

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September 19, 2006

Joe Barton, Chairman House Energy and Commerce Committee Rayburn Building, Room 2125 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Barton:

On behalf of the Biophysical Society, I am writing to express our support for the National Institutes of Health Reform Act of 2006. We very much appreciate your leadership in creating a bill that will give the NIH the flexibility it needs to address pressing public health needs and opportunities, while also maintaining the independence of the Institutes and Centers.

We thank you for authorizing increases to the NIH budget for the next three years, and for institutionalizing the Director's common fund, which will give the NIH leadership freedom to explore new scientific opportunities as they arise.

In addition, we very much appreciate your the inclusion of the Bridging the Sciences Demonstration Program in Section 9 of the Act. Improving health outcomes for the nation requires an investment in not only biological research, but also in physical, mathematical, and computational sciences. While the payoff for medicine is often several years away for this type of research, it is still a vital part of the enterprise and necessary to invest in for the future health of the nation's citizens. The demonstration program is an important step towards advancing this research and the life-saving discoveries it could generate.

Thank you for your leadership and support for the NIH. Please let us know how we can be helpful in advancing this legislation.

Dany & Lenty

Sincerely,

Barry Lentz, President