107TH CONGRESS
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S. RES. 347

Expressing the sense of the Senate that in order to seize unique scientific opportunities the Federal commitment to biomedical research should be tripled over a ten-year period beginning in 1999.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 17, 2002

Mr. SPECTER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Appropriations

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RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that in order to seize unique scientific opportunities the Federal commitment to biomedical research should be tripled over a ten-year period beginning in 1999.

Whereas past investments in biomedical research have resulted in better health, and improved quality of life for all Americans;

Whereas the Nation's commitment to biomedical research has expanded the base of scientific knowledge regarding health and disease and revolutionized the practice of medicine;

Whereas biomedical research continues to play a vital role in the growth of this Nation's biotechnology, medical device, and pharmaceutical industries;

Whereas the origins of many of the new drugs and medical devices currently in use are based in biomedical research supported by the National Institutes of Health;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health has contributed significantly to the first overall reduction in cancer death rates since recordkeeping was instituted;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health has developed effective treatments for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health in the last 30 years has doubled the life expectancy of sickle cell disease patients;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health has resulted in the identification of genetic mutations for osteoporosis, Lou Gehrig's Disease, cystic fibrosis, Huntington's Disease, breast cancer, skin cancer, prostate cancer, and a variety of other illnesses;

Whereas a third of all known genetic defects affect the nervous system, and so far more than 200 genes have been identified that can cause or contribute to neurological disorders, but a better understanding of multiple gene influences on disease risk, progression, and severity is needed;

Whereas research sponsored by the NIH has brought remarkable progress, with the first treatments for acute stroke and spinal cord injury, new immune therapies that ameliorate symptoms and slow the progression of multiple sclerosis, and increased drug and surgical options for Parkinson's disease, epilepsy and chronic pain;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health has been key to the development of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Positron Emission Tomography (PET), and other imaging technologies;

Whereas the emerging understanding of the principles of biometics has been applied to the development of hard tissue such as bone and teeth as well as soft tissue, and this field of study holds great promise for the design of new classes of biomaterials, pharmaceuticals, diagnostic and analytical reagents;

Whereas many Americans still face serious and life-threatening health problems, both acute and chronic;

Whereas neurodegenerative diseases of the elderly, such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease threaten to destroy the lives of millions of Americans, overwhelm the Nation's health care system, and bankrupt the Medicare and Medicaid programs;

Whereas muscular dystrophies continue to severely affect the quality of life and shorten the lifespan of many Americans;

Whereas one in one hundred Americans are currently infected with the hepatitis C virus, an insidious liver condition that can lead to inflammation, cirrhosis, and cancer as well as liver failure;

Whereas women have traditionally been under-represented in medical research protocols, yet are severely affected by diseases including breast cancer; ovarian cancer; and osteoporosis and cardiovascular disorders;

Whereas cancer remains a comprehensive threat to any tissue or organ of the body at any age, and remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality;

Whereas the extent of psychiatric and neurological diseases poses considerable challenges in understanding the workings of the brain and nervous system;

Whereas recent advances in the treatment of HIV illustrate the promise research holds for even more effective, accessible, and affordable treatments for persons with HIV, however at least 320,000 Americans are now suffering from AIDS and hundreds of thousands more with HIV infection;

Whereas diabetes, both insulin and non-insulin forms, afflict over 16 million Americans and place them at risk for acute and chronic complications, including blindness, kidney failure, atherosclerosis and nerve degeneration;

Whereas research sponsored by the National Institutes of Health has mapped and sequenced the entire human genome ahead of schedule, thereby ushering in a new era of molecular medicine that will provide unprecedented opportunities for the prevention, diagnoses, treatment, and cure of diseases that currently plague society;

Whereas an unprecedented variety of new treatments and prevention strategies for neurological disorders are under development, including drugs that are targeted at specific molecular processes, stem cell therapies that replace lost nerve cells, neural prostheses that read control signals directly from the brain, vaccines that target neurodegeneration, implantable electrical stimulators that compensate for brain circuits unbalanced by disease, vectors to repair or replace defective genes, and behavioral interventions that encourage the brain's latent capacity to repair itself;

Whereas the fundamental way science is conducted is changing at a revolutionary pace, demanding a far greater investment in emerging new technologies, research training programs, and in developing new skills among scientific investigators; and

Whereas most Americans show overwhelming support for an increased Federal investment in biomedical research: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This resolution may be cited as the ''Resolution for the Tripling of Biomedical Research''.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE SENATE.

It is the sense of the Senate that appropriations for the National Institutes of Health should be tripled over the ten year period from fiscal year 1999 to 2008.

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