

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
THE STUDY OF LIVER DISEASES



GOVERNING BOARD
2009

PRESIDENT

SCOTT L. FRIEDMAN, MD
MOUNT SINAI
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
NEW YORK, NY

PRESIDENT-ELECT

ARUN J. SANYAL, MD
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH
UNIVERSITY
RICHMOND, VA

SECRETARY

JACQUELYN J. MAHER, MD
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

TREASURER

MICHAEL R. LUCEY, MD
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
AND PUBLIC HEALTH
MADISON, WI

PAST PRESIDENT

ARTHUR J. MCCULLOUGH, MD
CLEVELAND CLINIC FOUNDATION
CLEVELAND, OH

COUNCILORS

T. JAKE LIANG, MD
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
BETHESDA, MD

GUADALUPE GARCIA-TSAO, MD

YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL
OF MEDICINE
NEW HAVEN, CT

J. GREGORY FITZ, MD

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
SOUTHWESTERN
DALLAS, TX

COUNCILORS-AT-LARGE

DOUGLAS W. HANTO, MD, PhD
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
BOSTON, MA

DOUGLAS R. LABRECQUE, MD

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HOSPITALS
& CLINICS
IOWA CITY, IA

ANNA MAE DIEHL, MD

DUKE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL CENTER
DURHAM, NC

EDITOR — HEPATOLOGY

KEITH D. LINDOR, MD
MAYO CLINIC
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
ROCHESTER, MN

EDITORS —

LIVER TRANSPLANTATION
JORGE L. RAKELA, MD
MAYO CLINIC
SCOTTSDALE, AZ

JOHN J. FUNG, MD, PhD

CLEVELAND CLINIC FOUNDATION
CLEVELAND, OH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SHERRIE H. CATHCART, CAE

March 30, 2009

Norman R. Augustine, Chair
Scientific Management Review Board
Office of the Director
National Institutes of Health, Building 1
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Mr. Augustine:

We are writing to respectfully request the opportunity for Gyongyi Szabo, M.D., Ph.D. to present testimony – both in person and in writing – at the meeting of the Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB) that is scheduled to occur on April 28, 2009 with regard to whether or not the SMRB should consider the issues surrounding a merger of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).

As you may know, the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD) is the leading international organization of scientists and healthcare professionals committed to preventing and curing liver disease. We foster research that leads to improved treatment options for millions of liver disease patients. We advance the science and the practice of hepatology, liver transplantation, and hepatobiliary surgery through educational conferences, training programs, professional publications, and partnerships with government agencies and sister societies.

Dr. Szabo, who is a leading researcher and a Professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School with faculty appointments in Gastroenterology and Medicine, as well as the Chair of the AASLD's NIH Liaison Committee, will testify with regard to the likely impact on the science of liver-related alcohol and drug abuse research that would result from the merger going forward. Further she will testify about the chilling effect that will certainly occur during the months or years during which this merger would be considered on both new and experienced investigators in liver research.

We believe that the SMRB has a valuable contribution to make with regard to assuring that every taxpayer dollar spent at the National Institutes of Health is done so efficiently and effectively, so as to maximize the scientific benefit to the American people. We believe that Dr. Szabo's testimony will make a significant contribution to

Norman R. Augustine
March 30, 2009
Page 2

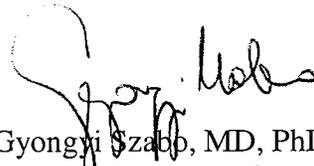
that work and would welcome the opportunity to work closely with the Board in the days and months ahead.

If you need further information about Dr. Szabo or about the AASLD, please contact Sherrie Cathcart, our Executive Director, at 703-299-9766 or at scathcart@aaasld.org. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Scott Friedman, MD
President



Gyongyi Szabo, MD, PhD
Chair, NIH Liaison Committee