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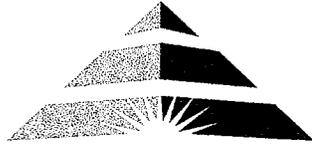
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*Because knowledge is the best defense*

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May 18, 2009

Mr. Norman R. Augustine, Chairman

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C/o Ms. Lyric Jorgenson, Ph.D.

NIH-AAAS Scientific and Technology Policy Fellow

Office of Science Policy

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National Institutes of Health

Building 1 Room 218 MSC 0166

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Bethesda, MD 20892

Re: National Institute of Hormonal Health and Metabolic Disorders

Dear Mr. Augustine, Board Members and staff:

On behalf of the Pituitary Network Association I wish to express our gratitude for allowing us to appear and make a presentation at your recent Board Meeting on April 27 and 28. We assume that you received our written support materials along with our presentation.

The creation of a "National Institute of Hormonal Health and Metabolic Disorders" has been an ongoing goal of the PNA, supported by our Scientific Advisors, by consultant Physicians and Surgeons, and by Patient Members for the past 12 years.

We understand that the Directors and staff of the NIH are concerned about the impact of major change and re-organization. Nevertheless we ask your committee to acknowledge that the Status Quo is unacceptable. It has done a great disservice to past and current patients and to the scientists working in this field. We ask only that up-to-date information be considered to recognize the prevalence and impact of these disorders. Pituitary hormonal medicine only became a reality with the identification of new hormones and therapies in the late 1960's and 1970's; today, diagnostic tools provide accurate assays to detect abnormalities of circulating hormones and we know that small hormonal changes have a profound effect on quality of life as well as longevity. However, the signs and symptoms are subtle and without awareness, these diseases usually smolder undiagnosed for many years, wreaking havoc on patients, their families and society.

Change is difficult but denial can be dangerous." Everything that can be invented has been invented" Charles H. Duell, Commissioner, US Patent Office is reported to have said in 1899. While this quote cannot be authenticated, the following have been: "No one knew better than the US Patent Office Commissioner that the industrial revolution in America was a time of fantastic innovation and change. Still, he wouldn't see the Wright brothers' airplane for four more years, the Model-T for nine years, or the first moving assembly line for fourteen years; nor would he see the radio, television, atomic power, microwaves, computers, or thousands of other inventions. In 1994 alone, 113,268 patents were issued. In 1981, Bill Gates said "640K ought to be enough for anybody"; within three years, the Chairman of Microsoft would realize that because MS-DOS limited users to 640K RAM of hard disk storage, it was becoming obsolete. In response to users' needs, he developed OS/2; released in 1987, OS/2 offered 25,000 times more memory -- 16 megabytes of RAM. Successful change management can lead to greater success.

In the field of medicine we have seen the emergence of HIV and SARS, proving that biology too can and does change its profile with time. We are all familiar with daily news stories reporting abuse of metabolic steroids, the frequency of anger, suicide, and depression, the epidemic of obesity and diabetes, and rising infertility rates. These are all hormonal in origin and society will benefit from a better understanding of their biological basis. The research in Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) shows that twenty percent of TBI patients in the general medical population have hormonal dysfunction. This data point can be further be extrapolated to identify one fifth of combat Veterans with TBI who may have hormonal dysfunction. It is clear that the US general population as well as our Veterans would benefit immensely from the creation of a National Institute of Hormonal Health and Metabolic Disorders.

We at the PNA respectfully request the SMRB to take action to rectify the situation. We are fortunate to be able to offer the assistance of (Retired) Colonel Wes Weiner, PNA's Director of Military Liaison, who will provide a point of contact in the effort to establish a National Institute of Hormonal Health and Metabolic Disorders (NIHH&MD).

Sincerely,



Robert Knutzen  
CEO/ Chairman  
Pituitary Network Association

RK; JM

Cc: PNA Board of Directors  
PNA Scientific Advisory Panel  
Col. Ret. Wes Weiner  
PNA Consultant, David Norgard

Encl: Materials