

To: Director Francis Collins and the members of the Scientific Management Review Board,

I am writing to express my concern about the effects on the National Center for Research Resources of forming a new Institute for Translational Medicine and Therapeutics which might house the CTSA program. A widely held perception is that establishing a new IC for TMAT would require the elimination of a standing IC and that removal of the CTSA program from NCRR would make that IC a likely target for disestablishment.

The NCRR supports research resources which are vital to researchers funded by a wide variety of NIH institutes. Indeed one of the requirements for support by NCRR of a resource is that the resource serve scientists supported by multiple NIH Institutes. These resources involve both shared equipment and specialized animal colonies. These resource programs are supported by a number of funding mechanisms such as P40 and R24 awards which are generally not available from other institutes. In addition, NCRR supports a number of unique training programs for veterinary doctors interested in entering research. Clearly, DVM scientists are in short supply and are vital to the mission of translational research.

Many of us who operate and/or rely on these resources are very concerned about a break-up of NCRR which might leave these resource programs (particularly those within the Division of Comparative Medicine) without proper management or funding support. We believe these resources are vital to the translational mission of NIH and, like the CTSA's, should not be allied with a disease-specific institute. Given the essential role that animal models and animal resources play in translational medicine, there also seems to be merit in keeping the CTSA's and the animal resource and related programs together in the same institute.

Thank you for considering these concerns as you move forward with the mission of the SMRB.

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