



Coalition to Protect Research



February 13, 2004

The Honorable Elias Zerhouni, MD
Director, National Institutes of Health
Building 1- Shannon Building, Room 126
1 Center Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

On behalf of the thousands of the scientists, institutions, patients, and families that our organizations represent, the Coalition to Protect Research (CPR) would like to express our appreciation and support for your response to Congress regarding human sexuality grants and their relevance to the mission of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Similarly, we wholeheartedly share your support for the peer review process that ensures NIH funds only the most meritorious scientific research. Your response to Congress will go a long way in educating the public and those policy makers who had questions about these critical areas of research.

Enclosed is a roster of member organizations that came together under the CPR umbrella in direct response to these questions on peer review and human sexuality research. We are a diverse coalition committed to promoting public health through research. We represent scientists, physicians, health care providers and patients that support Federal investments in basic biomedical and behavioral research on human sexual development, sexual health, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases.

As you so eloquently stated in your response to Congress, "The constant battle against illness and disease cannot be limited to biological factors." Sexual health issues impact the lives of millions of Americans. High-risk sexual behaviors exacerbate the public health challenges of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, which can also lead to infertility or cancer. As NIH funded research has shown, difficulties in sexual arousal are associated not only with infertility, heart disease, diabetes, and depression, but may be connected to past traumas such as sexual abuse or rape. Sexual health and behavior research is needed to provide a scientific foundation for sound public health prevention and intervention programs. Attacks on this research based upon on ideological grounds malign the integrity of the peer review process and denigrate the value of those lives that are affected by these diseases and disorders everyday.

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As the co-chairs of CPR, we look forward to working with you and the NIH staff on this important issue and would like to be a resource for your office. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

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CC: Tommy Thompson, J.D., Secretary of Health and Human Services
Raynard Kington, M.D., Ph.D., M.B.A., NIH Deputy Director
Virginia Cain, Ph.D., Acting Director, Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research
NIH Institute and Center Directors



Coalition to Protect Research

Member Organizations

- AAAS
- AIDS Action
- AIDS Alliance for Children, Youth and Families
- American Academy for HIV Medicine
- American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors, and Therapists
- American College of Nurse-Midwives
- American Foundation for AIDS Research
- American Psychological Association
- American Psychological Society
- American Social Health Association
- American Society for Reproductive Medicine
- American Sociological Association
- Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- Association of Population Centers
- Association of Reproductive Health Professionals
- Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine
- Center for Health and Gender Equity
- Consortium of Social Science Associations
- Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences
- **Gay & Lesbian Medical Association**
- HIV Medicine Association
- Human Rights Campaign
- Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
- National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Health
- National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (NFPRHA)
- LLEGO: National Latina/o LGBT Organization
- National Mental Health Association
- National Women's Health Network
- Population Association of America
- Reproductive Health Technologies Project
- Research!America
- Society for Adolescent Medicine
- Society for Research in Child Development
- Society for Women's Health Research
- The AIDS Institute
- The Alan Guttmacher Institute
- The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the US (SIECUS)
- The Society in the Scientific Study of Sexuality
- University of Washington Reproductive and Sexual Medicine Clinic