



## Alliance for Taxpayer Access

August 26, 2004

Dr. Elias Zerhouni  
126 NIH Bldg. 1  
National Institutes of Health  
9000 Rockville Pike  
Bethesda, MD 20892

### ***HARD COPY BY REGULAR MAIL***

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

The widespread dissemination of medical advances and scientific findings is critical to obtaining the best return possible on our nation's investment in research. Unfortunately, most Americans effectively do not have access to the results of research paid for with their tax dollars, including biomedical research conducted with National Institutes of Health (NIH) support. Today's technology is not being used optimally to facilitate the open and rapid exchange of publicly supported science within and across our borders.

The vast majority of federally-funded published research is available only through increasingly costly journal subscriptions (often costing thousands or tens of thousands of dollars annually), institutional license fees (more than a million dollars annually for many universities), or per-article purchases (often topping \$30 per article). This closed system leaves the American public - including physicians, public health professionals, patients and patient groups, students, teachers, librarians and scientists at academic institutions, hospitals, research laboratories, and corporate research centers -- under-informed about important, timely research results they helped finance. In the age of the Internet, it is no longer acceptable that millions of Americans lack access to this credible, peer-reviewed research to inform their work, their studies and their personal healthcare decisions.

In recognizing that a first significant step toward addressing this problem has been proposed by the U.S. House of Representatives Labor, HHS & Education Subcommittee on Appropriations, we applaud your leadership in this area. We appreciate the direction set by your recent statements and your commitment to allow broad stakeholder input as you develop an appropriate solution to give the public open access to such vital healthcare information.

The proposal to place the majority of the final manuscripts of NIH research in PubMed Central six months following publication is a smart and timely solution to a mounting public issue. Capturing and making this research available provides a tool for enhanced agency accountability and lays the groundwork for the accelerated exchange and application of knowledge across scientific disciplines. It recognizes that broad access to information about scientific advances is

an inseparable component of our investment in the research enterprise. It enables the American public to better recognize and more fully make use of the fruits of the research they have funded.

Please accept the support of the undersigned for your efforts to provide open access to taxpayer-funded research.

Sincerely,

AIDS Action Baltimore  
AIDS Vaccine Advisory Coalition  
American Association of Law Libraries  
American Library Association  
American Medical Student Association  
Arthritis Foundation  
Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries  
Association of College & Research Libraries  
Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs  
Association of Research Libraries  
Association of Southeastern Research Libraries  
Autosomal Recessive Polycystic Kidney Disease and Congenital Hepatic Fibrosis Alliance  
Barth Syndrome Foundation  
Boston College Libraries  
Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation  
Coalition for Heritable Disorders of Connective Tissue  
Colorado State University Libraries  
Conquer Fragile X Syndrome  
Down Syndrome Treatment and Research Foundation  
Facing Our Risk of Cancer Empowered  
Genetic Alliance  
International Mosaic Down Syndrome Association  
IsoDicentric 15 Exchange, Advocacy & Support  
Medical Library Association  
National Alliance for Autism Research  
National Coalition for PKU & Allied Disorders  
National Fragile X Foundation  
National Tay-Sachs & Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
New England Biolabs  
Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy  
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association  
Public Knowledge  
Pseudoxanthoma Elasticum (PXE) International  
Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition  
Special Libraries Association  
Spina Bifida Association of America  
Tourette Syndrome Association  
University of Connecticut Libraries  
University of Wisconsin-Madison Libraries  
Wayne State University College of Nursing