



For Release Oct. 21, 2009

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### **Sustained Growth For Research Funding is Key Issue in 2011 Budget**

Bethesda, MD (Oct. 21, 2009) – Each year millions of Americans are diagnosed with digestive disorders, including colorectal cancer, food borne illness, inflammatory bowel disease, obesity, gastrointestinal cancers and motility disorders. In some of these areas, medical research has brought us closer to developing lifesaving treatments and cures. Yet, in others, we still lack even a basic understanding of the cause and transmission of the diseases.

The American Gastroenterological Association is proud to represent thousands of gastroenterologists who conduct important research on digestive diseases. The 108<sup>th</sup> Congress created a National Commission on Digestive Diseases at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which recently issued a long-range plan for research into digestive diseases. We thank lawmakers for their commitment to this commission.

We also thank the president, members of Congress and the American taxpayer for the generous funding included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to fund medical research supported by the NIH.

Today we add our voice to the Research Means Hope campaign in calling on President Obama and Congress to consider the 2011 budget for NIH, and to be champions of improving the nation's health by making NIH research a pillar of the nation's long-term economic growth plan and putting NIH research on a path toward sustainable, predictable, long-term growth.

Research can lead to new treatments for the more than 70 million patients with digestive diseases. New treatments will not only help care for and cure patients affected with digestive diseases, but reduce health-care spending. For that reason, we advocate that NIH estimate costs for implementation of the National Commission on Digestive Diseases' long-range plan for digestive disease research, and identify an oversight body to ensure that the plan is executed from start to finish.

While there are many competing and compelling priorities to balance in the federal budget, AGA advocates that a strong commitment to NIH and medical research should be a top priority.

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**The American Gastroenterological Association is the trusted voice of the GI community.** Founded in 1897, the AGA has grown to include 17,000 members from around the globe who are involved in all aspects of the science, practice and advancement of gastroenterology.  
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