

DANIEL K. INOUE
HAWAII

APPROPRIATIONS
Subcommittee on Defense—Chairman

COMMERCE, SCIENCE AND TRANSPORTATION,
CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND COORDINATION
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United States Senate

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September 27, 2007

Elias Zerhouni, M.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
9000 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-0001

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

Scientific leadership for basic behavioral science at an institute such as the National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) has been a key interest of mine for many years. The importance of behavior on health has been documented in reports from the Surgeon General, the National Academies of Science, and by National Institutes of Health (NIH) itself in the statute that created National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). More recently, your own Advisory Committee recommended that an institute like National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) should become the National Institutes of Health (NIH) home for basic behavioral science.

I wanted to bring to your attention report language that has been included in the FY 2008 Labor-HHS report at my request:

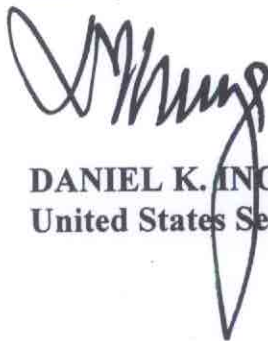
Basic Behavioral Research- The Committee is aware that basic behavioral research focused on such areas as cognition, perception, emotion, social interaction, and learning have led to important advances and improved treatments for depression, bipolar and other affective disorders, diabetes, compliance on behavior change related to diabetes, heart disease, cancer, obesity, and more effective public health announcements and interventions. In view of the fact that 8 out of the 10 leading causes of death have a significant behavioral component and that basic research is the underpinning of advances in behavioral research, the Committee is concerned by the continued lack of focus of scientific leadership at NIH for this important field of science. It is therefore requested that the Director submit a report to the Committee by December 1, 2007, indicating the scientific leadership structure for this field

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within the appropriate grant-making Institute. (page 156, Senate Report 110-107)

I am disappointed that the NIH has ignored similar previous Congressional guidance. As this matter is within your discretion to resolve, I hope you will respect this year's Committee language and I would appreciate a report from you on this important issue.

Aloha,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Inouye', written in a cursive style.

DANIEL K. INOUE
United States Senator

DKI:phda
cc: Secretary Michael Leavitt
Senator Tom Harkin