

Dear Member of Parliament,

I would like to applaud the Government of Canada for a number of measures in the Federal Government's 2009 Budget, including the more than \$1.5 Billion investment in science and technology.

However, the cuts to the funding for the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the other granting councils as highlighted in appendix 3 of the budget document are concerning. Without increased investments to support science and health research, Canada will lose the competitive edge that previous investments in infrastructure have achieved. Our global partners are making these investments.

Advancing health research in Canada depends on investments in discovery research through the granting councils. Increased funding is required to allow the granting councils to respond to the recent growth in infrastructure and research capacity through the CFI and the Canada Research Chairs Program respectively. Failure to align these funding streams at the federal level will create a serious imbalance in the supply and demand in research and in turn increasingly affect our capacity to retain and recruit the best scientists. Similarly, while I applaud the generation of Canada Graduate Scholarships, there needs to be a commensurate funding increase to the granting councils as a graduate student, active in health research, requires consumables in the order of \$20,000 per year.

The economic impact of Canadian health research is significant. Funding for science not only creates good jobs across the economy but it also serves to maintain Canada's position as a leader in health research and education.

Canada has many of the right ingredients to succeed in the knowledge-based economy including a highly skilled workforce and some of the best research facilities in the world. Increased funding to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research will serve to maintain our nation's leadership position. Cuts to the federal granting councils as outlined in the federal budget will however jeopardize our leadership position. It will be much more costly to restore resources and rebuild a skilled workforce that is lost due to budget constraints, than to maintain the existing workforce and skills with an increase to the budgets of the granting agencies.

I am looking forward to working with the Government of Canada in laying the foundation for a stronger and more sustainable economy of the future, which makes research and development in the health and life sciences a top national priority.

Sincerely,