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\$25 Million In Federal Aid To Jackson Laboratory Approved By Senate; NIH, Natcher Are Opposed

The Senate last week passed a bill authorizing \$25 million to help rebuild the mouse production facility at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, ME, which was destroyed by fire earlier this year. NIH, in a draft policy statement released last week, opposed the legislation. The bill also is running into resistance from Rep. William Natcher (D-KY), chairman of the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

Two major professional societies have joined forces to
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In Brief

NCHSR Says Autologous Marrow Transplant Is A "Reasonable Therapeutic Alternative"

NATIONAL CENTER for Health Services Research & Health Care Technology has concluded that autologous bone marrow transplantation (ABMT) does avoid complications that frequently occur when marrow from unmatched donors is used. "ABMT has been widely accepted and appears to be a reasonable therapeutic alternative for patients who may benefit from bone marrow transplantation and who do not have a matched donor," the center said. The assessment of the procedure was conducted by NCHSR's Office of Health Technology Assessment which evaluates new or unestablished medical technologies being considered for reimbursement under Medicare or other federal health programs. Single copies of "Autologous Bone Marrow Transplantation," Health Technology Assessment Reports, 1988, No. 3, (HHS Publication No. 89-3436, are available free from NCHSR, Publications & Information Branch, Parklawn Bldg. Rm 18-12, Rockville, MD 20857, phone 301/443-4100. . . . CORRECTION: The correct phone number for information on the annual Bristol-Myers Symposium on Cancer Research, Sept. 26-27 in Toronto, is 416/333-4330. . . . ENID HAUPT, philanthropist who had already endowed two chairs at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, has endowed eight more chairs for senior clinical and laboratory investigators. Three of the new chairs have been awarded to **Malcolm Moore**, in cell biology; **Clifton Ling**, in medical physics; and **Patricia Mazzola Lewis**, in nursing. Other new chairs still to be awarded are in clinical investigation, lymphoma, medical oncology, surgery, and developmental biology. **Bayard Clarkson** holds one of the two chairs Haupt established in 1980, in therapeutic research. The other 1980 chair, in pediatric oncology, is vacant.

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Damages At Jackson Lab \$40 Million; Insurance To Cover Only \$16 Million

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make the case for federal support to rebuild the nonprofit laboratory's central production facility, which was the largest mouse mutant resource in the world and provided U.S. researchers with 1,700 mutant mice strains, or 33 percent of all mice used for research in this country. The facility was destroyed by fire on May 10. Damages, including the loss of 400,000 mice, are estimated at \$40 million.

The American Society of Clinical Oncology, and the American Assn. for Cancer Research this week began asking members to write to key congressmen in support of the legislation.

The mice shortage caused by the fire is critical. Many of the mutant strains in which Jackson Laboratory specialized cannot be found elsewhere. Jackson has a waiting list for 71 strains of mice, as of last week. Of about a dozen special strains considered by the National Academy of Sciences as important to research, only two are commercially available, according to Jackson officials.

"The country is entirely dependent on the facility here," Ken Paigen, director of the Jackson Laboratory, told **The Cancer Letter**. "In terms of research it covers almost everything, but the area that has been impacted the worst is immunology."

Other areas greatly affected by the shortage are cancer, AIDS, autoimmune diseases, lupus, diabetes, atherosclerosis, arthritis, neurological illnesses.

Basic research on these diseases, efforts to develop new methods of diagnosis and therapy, and the development of new research tools, such as transgenic mice, that are important for basic and clinical research and biotechnology,

have been disrupted, laboratory officials said.*

Jackson supplied inbred and mutant mice to more than 11,000 laboratories in the U.S., including virtually every medical school, university, independent biomedical laboratory, and government research facility.

The fire interrupted the supply of animals for an estimated \$1 billion per year worth of biomedical research, the laboratory said. Most of that, about \$700 to \$800 million, is basic research, primarily supported by NIH. About \$200 to \$300 million is supported by biotechnology and pharmaceutical firms.

Lab To Meet With NIH

The bill passed by the Senate, S.1390, does not mention the Jackson Laboratory by name and the funding is open to competition from any institution that can provide exotic and unusual strains of mice. However, as a practical matter, no other institution is likely to compete successfully against Jackson for the award.

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) cosponsored the bill.

The bill has several hurdles ahead. A companion bill must be introduced in the House and must be approved by the House Subcommittee on Health & the Environment, chaired by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA).

The money will have to be put in appropriations legislation by the Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA).

Finally, Natcher will have to agree to adding the money in conference with the Senate on the final HHS/NIH appropriations.

NIH, in a draft policy statement released last week, opposed federal funding to help the Jackson Laboratory rebuild. However, Paigen and his assistant Ken Trevett were scheduled to meet with NIH Acting Director William Raub and other officials this week to discuss the matter. The meeting was past **The Cancer Letter** deadline.

The NIH statement said the agency "does not wish to set a precedent by assisting any private organization in restoring its facilities after a crisis."

The statement also said that if an additional \$25 million were to be made available, NIH "has a number of pressing needs" for the funds, including research project grants.

NIH is "paranoid" that the bill will take \$25 million out of its appropriations, a source who is lobbying for the bill's passage said.

Proponents of the bill argue that it is not

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the biomedical equivalent of the bailouts of Chrysler, Lockheed or the savings and loans. In those cases, bad management practices and economics were the main causes of difficulty.

Supporters of the bill also note that even if NIH were to put \$25 million more into research grants, the investigators who would qualify might require special strains of mice that would not be available if not for the Jackson Laboratory.

Paigen said he will try to convince NIH of the need for federal support. "NIH hasn't had much information in order to formulate a good policy and our function (at the meeting) will be to provide information," Paigen said. "The question is, ultimately, who pays?"

The laboratory has a contract with NIH to provide 100,000 mice of 117 strains annually. The contract is for \$700,000 a year.

Jackson also has two grants from NIH to support mouse resource colonies. One grant for a mouse mutant gene resource will have provided a total of \$1.64 million from 1978 to 1990. Another, for cryopreservation of murine germplasm, was for a total of \$1.54 million and runs from 1982 to 1990.

The National Science Foundation awarded the laboratory a grant in 1969 for a mouse mutant stock center, for a total of \$2.4 million. The grant runs out in 1990.

NIH has taken the stance that most of the strains of mice can be replaced through other, commercial, sources. Jackson Laboratory officials say that is not the case.

NIH has a contract with the Charles River Laboratory, a commercial supplier, to provide 21 strains of mice. NIH will not be able to find about 100 strains of the 117 it has under contract with Jackson anywhere else, Paigen said.

"The bulk of what is used are four strains and those are what the commercials focus on," Paigen said. "Those are the ones you use if you want genetically defined strains. The importance of the other, exotic, strains is all out of proportion to their numbers."

For example, Paigen said, there is one strain used in diabetes research that gets insulin dependent diabetes. Researchers can mutate the mice so that it loses its cellular immunity. After transplanting another gene, the mice get diabetes again in three weeks.

"It's a powerful demonstration," Paigen said.

Besides supplying other researchers with mice, the laboratory, founded in 1929, conducts its own research.

However, Jackson's research laboratory was

not what burned in the fire, Paigen said.

"Our research program has suffered the least from the fire because our own (mouse) production was at a separate facility," he said. "What burned was our central production facility that supplied the rest of country."

The NIH statement said it was opposed to supporting a private research organization. Paigen noted, "The people who will suffer are not the researchers here, but the rest of the country."

The fire resulted in a total loss estimated at \$40 million, including lost animals, building replacement, emergency operations during the recovery process and lost revenue. Among the losses were 400,000 mice, 43,000 square feet of facilities and 25,000 square feet of animal production space that was severely damaged.

The laboratory's insurance will cover only \$16 million of the loss.

"One financial question people have asked is, why don't we rebuild out of operating funds, and why were we not insured to completely cover the loss?" Paigen said.

He said that the laboratory had two choices after the fire. One option was to discontinue mouse production, put about \$9.5 million in insurance funds in an endowment fund and become a private research organization. The second was to set up a "crash production facility" and lose about \$24 million.

"We made the choice to go ahead and gamble," because of the national need for Jackson mice, Paigen said.

Laboratory officials adopted a "two track" recovery effort. Temporary animal space is being installed at a cost of \$7 million while permanent facilities are designed and constructed, at a cost of \$20 million. Additional expenses are the lost animals, clean up costs, unemployment expenses and lost revenue.

Paigen said the laboratory will have a deficit of \$4.5 million a year for the next two years, optimistically. With that deficit, there will be no operating revenues to apply to the cost of rebuilding.

"There is no way we can rebuild without assistance," Paigen said.

The laboratory was fully insured for the property loss, but since the building destroyed was built in 1960, the funds recovered will not be enough to construct a comparable building now. In addition, since 1960 there have been considerable advances in animal husbandry and design and building standards. The old building was under renovation at the time of the fire.

Business interruption insurance will provide

the laboratory with \$7.9 million for one year. The animals were not covered by insurance because of the expense. Only one company would bid on the coverage and the premium would have been \$1.28 million in 1989, Jackson officials said.

An independent insurance adjuster from Coopers & Lybrand determined that the laboratory was well insured at the time of the fire, and in the case of property and business interruption, was insured to the extent possible.

The laboratory has received grants from five foundations totalling \$1.26 million. The Howard Hughes Medical Institute provided \$750,000 of that amount because of the disruption of animal supplies to its investigators.

Jackson officials say that private foundation support alone cannot make up the cost of rebuilding. Most foundations limit their support to programs, not bricks and mortar.

The laboratory also has begun a fundraising drive. By the end of July, it had raised \$97,794. Professional fundraisers generally advise that fundraising drives can raise a yearly amount equal to 10 times the amount of an institution's annual giving. In the past 10 years, the laboratory has raised about \$300,000 per year in its annual giving program. Using that formula, the laboratory may be able to raise \$3 million this year.

Borrowing the funds for the \$27 million construction program would cost \$44 million in interest charges, Paigen said. The costs would have to be recovered by increasing the price of the mice. The laboratory estimated it would have to raise the average cost per animal from \$6.62 to \$8.50. Paigen noted that the price increase would be passed along to granting agencies as a direct supply charge.

The NIH draft policy statement called Jackson Laboratory a "commercial" institution. Paigen emphasized that the laboratory is nonprofit.

The price the laboratory charges for animals on a "fee for service" basis, meaning that it charges for the actual cost of physical production plus a fee over that amount, less than 20 percent.

"Our prices hold the prices down in the mouse industry," Paigen said. "If we stopped producing, it would cost NIH and NIH grantees \$34 million the first year from the jump in mice costs, and that's a conservative guess."

Paigen noted that others have suggested

letting market forces take over in the production of mutant mice.

In answer to that argument, Paigen said, "The commercial firms haven't the least interest in providing those stocks and strains. They've had opportunity in the past and have refused."

As an example, Paigen said that one mouse strain that has been used recently in research "was sitting on a shelf for 34 years until somebody found a use for it."

Another argument put forth by opponents of federal funding is that Jackson Laboratory could produce only the specialty strains and mutants, and leave the common inbred mice to other suppliers.

"If we had to run a colony of only exotic mice we would have a deficit of \$3 to \$4 million a year," Paigen said. Sales of the inbred mice help to cover the costs of the exotic types.

Jackson Laboratory is aware that it may come under criticism for the fact that U.S. researchers have become so dependent on a single supplier for many mice strains.

Laboratory officials argue that the lost mouse production must be recovered at a single institution because of the danger of spreading diseases among research colonies of mice.

If mice infected with any of a number of common mouse viruses were nationally distributed, many animal colonies could easily be destroyed, creating a research disaster much worse than the interruption of the supply that the fire has caused.

In addition, the costs would be higher and the logistics nearly impossible because of the need for uniform genetic and health standards.

"The system can only work if national distribution is limited to a few sources, and these can be relied upon to safely raise mice under sterile conditions, rigorously monitoring the health and genetic identity of the animals produced," according to a statement released by the laboratory last week.

The Jackson Laboratory is unique in that it can supply 1,700 strains and mutants on demand. Since only a small number of each strain is necessary, there is no economic incentive for commercial labs to get into the exotic mice business.

"Jackson Laboratory is only able to do this because so many of the research staff are able to contribute to the breadth of scientific expertise required to maintain and breed these strains and because the laboratory also

supplies the common inbred strains," the statement said.

Jackson officials said the federal funding could be contingent on the requirement that the laboratory develop a construction plan that separates its facilities into several small production areas so that damages of the magnitude caused by the fire cannot happen again.

A recent peer review of the Jackson Laboratory by NCI stated in its evaluation, "The Jackson Laboratory is not only important to the national cancer effort, but is critical to its success."

Societies Promise To Help

Karen Antman, head of ASCO's Public Issues Committee, and Harris Busch, president of AACR, told **The Cancer Letter** that they would ask members of their organizations to write to their congressmen in support of the legislation.

"All of us are favorably convinced that Jackson Laboratory has an important role," Busch said.

House committee staff members have complained that they have not heard from major professional societies about the importance of the laboratory.

The Senate bill authorizes funding to "provide a single grant, through a competitive application process, to a public or private nonprofit entity to enable such entity to construct a facility for the development, production and distribution of inbred and mutant mice that are to be used for biomedical research."

"We don't have a problem going in on a competitive basis," Paigen said.

Indeed, Jackson is known as the world leader in mouse production and it is highly unlikely any other nonprofit institution could win the award.

Despite the NIH policy statement that it did not wish to "set a precedent," there is, in fact, precedent for federal support of construction funding through competitive peer review for private institutions. The most recent is the DRR construction grants program, authorized by Congress, to provide funding to private facilities to renovate laboratories for AIDS research.

Congress and NIH recognized the emergency nature of the AIDS crisis and targeted funds for construction even though general construction authority and the money to support it has not been forthcoming.

In addition, federal grants to the laboratory

over the past 30 years have supported production. The first, in 1960, was a major NIH grant to buy equipment for the production facility which had just been built.

At that time, the Surgeon General argued in support of the grant, saying the laboratory "carries out a research and service function essential to biomedical research throughout the United States....If such an organization had not been in existence over the years it seems clear that steps would have to be taken by NIH to establish one.

"Scientists engaged in research of the type eligible for support by NIH grants have been and will continue to be dependent on this laboratory for development and supply of a wide variety of mice, particularly inbred strains."

Federal support for Jackson has totalled \$5.6 million since 1960, according to the laboratory. But laboratory officials note that the lab itself has provided greater amounts of its own operating funds to support mouse strains.

In a statement released in response to the NIH policy, Jackson officials argue that the laboratory's circumstances are different from those of other research institutions which have been affected by natural disasters or animal terrorist activities.

"While these incidents have been regrettable and in some cases tragic, they have affected individual research facilities rather than a national resource," the statement said. "These incidents have not had the national impact of the Jackson Laboratory fire because of the unique role that the laboratory plays as a resource to other investigators.

"As a major supplier of unique strains of mice to the research community, and in many cases the sole supplier, the laboratory functions as a quasi public institution. If it did not exist, another institution of its kind--either public or private--would have to replace it."

Text Of NIH Statement

The NIH statement noted that the laboratory provided one fifth of all inbred mice used in biomedical research in the U.S., and though the production facility was destroyed, the breeding stock for all of the 1,700 strains of mice were saved.

"In the short term, Jackson Laboratory is prepared to commit part of its insurance funds to construct temporary production facilities to help meet the national need," the NIH statement said.

"In the long term, the Jackson Laboratory will need to use earnings from the sale of mice, and obtain or redirect current resources to rebuild its permanent facilities."

The statement continued, "The facility has already started to supply certain strains of mice on a limited basis; 50 percent production capacity may be reached within six months. Other commercial sources that have or can obtain stocks of breeder mice are planning to join the effort by increasing their production."

Following is rest of the policy statement. It is possible that this policy will be revised following Paigen's meeting with Raub; however, this is the version that has found its way into congressional offices:

"NIH considers the fire at the Jackson Laboratory a serious, unfortunate incident. It would be inappropriate, however, for the NIH to play a direct role in assisting a commercial organization to restore the facilities in the wake of a disaster. This policy is not limited to the situation with the Jackson Laboratories; NIH does not wish to set a precedent by assisting any private organization in restoring its facilities after a crisis.

"Disasters have occurred in other research facilities, both through forces of nature and through destructive acts such as terrorism by animal rights groups. Presumably, their recoveries have been dealt with through insurance or by other means.

"This policy is formed in the context of the crisis of the federal deficit and the limited funds available for biomedical research. It would not be in the best interest of this agency's goals to divert scarce resources away from existing research programs. Even if specific funds were provided in excess of the NIH's budget, the agency has a number of pressing needs for which the funds could be used. With the expected budget for the next fiscal year, for example, the award rate for approved grants is expected to drop from 29 percent to 24 percent.

"NIH holds that the needs of the biomedical community and the Jackson Laboratory should be met through initiatives taken by the Jackson Laboratory and by individuals and private organizations."

Antman and Busch said they would encourage researchers to write or call their congressmen to urge support of the bill providing \$25 million for the Jackson Laboratory. Letters, phone calls and facsimile transmissions should be addressed to the following key members of Congress. On

letters, include the entire nine digit ZIP code.

Sen. Tom Harkin, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-1502; phone 202/224-3254; fax 202/224-7431.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510-4402; phone 202/224-5251.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20210-2101.

Rep. Henry Waxman, United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515-0524; phone 202/225-3976; fax 202/225-4099.

Rep. William Natcher, United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515-1702; phone 202/225-3501.

ASCO and AACR members will be encouraged to write or call their own representatives in Congress.

Vucanovich Urges Increased Funding For Cancer Information Service

Rep. Barbara Vucanovich (R-NV) has urged that the NCI's Cancer Information Service be provided increased funding in the fiscal 1990 budget appropriations.

Vucanovich engaged Rep. William Natcher (D-KY) in a "colloquy," a formal conversation on the floor of the House, when Natcher presented the HHS appropriations bill.

The statement most likely will not affect the actual appropriations, but may help to rally support for the CIS.

"As a member of Congress who has survived breast cancer, an epidemic cancer that killed more than 45,000 women last year, I would like to emphasize the many vital services provided by the Cancer Information Service," Vucanovich said.

"The Cancer Information Service receives more than 400,000 calls every year on the nationwide toll free phone line, 800-4-CANCER. Most of these calls come from cancer patients and the general public, but the Cancer Information Service also provides up to the minute information on research and referrals for health care professionals around the country, through the Physicians Data Query database.

"Many cancer deaths could be prevented by early detection, and communications and education are the bridge to improving the odds for early detection. The Cancer Information Service provides the principal public outreach of the National Cancer Institute.

"Would the chairman (Natcher) agree that funding for the Cancer Information Service

serves a vital purpose within the National Cancer Institute?"

Natcher replied: "The committee supports every effort to deal with the serious problem of breast cancer in this country. We recognize the importance of public education and outreach programs in efforts to control this disease and support increased spending for these programs at the National Cancer Institute."

Rep. Silvio Conte (R-MA) also joined the discussion "I wish to join in support of the NCI outreach program and the Cancer Information Service," he said.

"Breast cancer can be cured with early diagnosis and treatment. We are expanding the Cancer Information Center to reach minority and economically disadvantaged women. We will continue to support this important service and hope that all women in America will use it."

Next year, the spokesman said, Vucanovich hopes to take a larger role in pressing for more support for CIS.

In other action, Vucanovich and Rep. Mary Rose Oakar (D-OH) have asked HHS Secretary Louis Sullivan to urge that the Health Care Financing Administration provide coverage under Medicare of wigs for patients who have lost their hair through radiation or chemotherapy.

AACI Leaders Regret "Unfortunate Rhetoric," Pledge Support To Broder

Cancer center representatives, some of whom had expressed strong criticism of NCI and its leadership at the annual meeting of the Assn. of American Cancer Institutes, have cooled off somewhat. Comments by NCI Director Samuel Broder asking for some patience, and a meeting of AACI leaders with Broder and other NCI staff members, apparently had something to do with it.

Ross McIntyre, director of the Norris Cotton Cancer Center, immediate past president of AACI and chairman of the association's Board of Directors, sent the following letter to *The Cancer Letter*:

"Two issues of *The Cancer Letter* have reported on events at the Assn. of American Cancer Institutes' meeting held June 22-24 of this year. Other members of the cancer center community and I presented strong views concerning the importance of interdisciplinary research in cancer, and the severe straits in

which the cancer centers program finds itself, given the current and anticipated 1990 National Cancer Institute budget.

"During this meeting the commitment to interdisciplinary research and the philosophy behind the development of the centers program was palpable, and our disappointment with the present situation was real.

"I should hasten to add, however, that meetings of the AACI Board of Directors with Dr. Broder at the time of the ASCO meetings [in May] and subsequent to the AACI meeting on July 6 have indicated that Dr. Broder has a solid commitment to the concept of cancer centers and is attempting to deal effectively with the problems facing the program. I hope that the strident manner in which I (and others) called attention to the problem does not interfere with the process necessary to improve the situation.

"Clearly, the staffing problems at NCI, aggravated by departures of key leaders, the low pay scales and staff ceilings, as well as diversion of personnel and resources to the AIDS effort are posing a tremendous threat to the dynamism in capable program development that has characterized NCI over the years. Dr. Broder and his staff will need all the support we can give them.

"The major goals and methodology remain unassailable, and it is unfortunate that, in the rhetoric of persuasion voiced at our meeting, 'white hats' and 'black hats' seemed to appear. The issue of priorities on a national scale, the NCI budget vs. other components of the federal budget, and the balance of core support vs. individual investigator initiated grants, training, construction, and other NCI activities are too important to be cast in this oversimplified light.

"As chairman of the Board of Directors of the Assn. of American Cancer Institutes, I am committed to working constructively with Dr. Broder and his staff to address the major needs of the cancer program on national as well as local scenes."

ASCO Issues RFP For Organizing, Staffing, Managing New Office In D.C.

The American Society of Clinical Oncology is looking for a firm to organize and staff the office which the Society intends to establish in Washington D.C.

ASCO has issued a formal request for proposals soliciting responses from organizations with appropriate expertise, following

through on recommendations of the Society's Strategic Planning Committee, approved at the annual meeting in May (The Cancer Letter, June 9).

The RFP, with a deadline of Sept. 30 for responses, follows:

The ASCO Board of Directors is requesting a formal proposal for structure and staffing of a Washington D.C. office to support expanded ASCO legislative initiatives via a contract mechanism with an anticipated budget of \$100,000-300,000. The ASCO board has determined that:

1. ASCO's expanded legislative responsibilities and activities cannot be undertaken by existing volunteer committees in the absence of increased staff and budget support.

2. Staff support for the Public Issues Committee and Clinical Practice Committee should take the form of personnel within an existing Washington area office.

3. The Washington office will be staffed initially with at least one professional with secretarial support. Subsequent professionals will be hired if the Board of Directors determines that the work required exceeds the current capacity of ASCO contracted personnel, and financial resources are adequate to support additional personnel.

4. Priorities of the staff in the Washington office would be reviewed at six month intervals by the ASCO Board of Directors. Between board meetings, Washington staff will be supervised administratively by the contractor and coordinated and supervised programmatically by the chairs of the Public Issues Committee and the Clinical Practices Committee, with the advice and consent of the president of ASCO, and when necessary at the discretion of the president of the Executive Committee.

5. Public Issues Committee and Clinical Practice Committee members (with appropriate expertise from within the membership on specialized issues when appropriate) would serve as the medical resource (for drug data, reimbursement issues, indications for medical procedures, NCI program planning and program data, etc.). The Public Issues Committee has been designated to speak for ASCO in Congress and with other federal agencies (HCFA, PPRC, etc.) to influence the development of health and medical policy at the national level. Priorities include reauthorization of the National Cancer Act and yearly appropriations for the National Cancer Institute, funding for clinical and basic

research, and interactions with other organizations on political and economic issues. The Clinical Practice Committee emphasizes reimbursement issues, standards of care, reimbursement coding, technology transfer, practice problems, clinical investigation in private practice, and monitoring local and regional issues.

6. Proposals should include facilities (space, parking, equipment, benefits, etc.), and the available expertise, if any, of other technical staff with complementary financial, and analytic expertise. The proposal should outline the appropriate number of staff to discharge the responsibilities listed below.

The initial professional hired should have legislative or legal experience in researching and drafting legislative reports. (A former congressional staffer with eight-ten years of prior experience in health policy might be ideal).

The Washington staff would have the following responsibilities:

- * Analyze political, legislative and economic issues from ASCO's perspective.

- * Develop ASCO's options for political, legislative, and economic problems or opportunities.

- * Draft testimony and responses to Congress, HCFA, PPRC, and other federal agencies.

- * Communicate issues and options to the Public Issues and Clinical Practice Committee chairs in a timely manner.

- * Facilitate the process by which ASCO takes a position on a particular issue.

- * Formalize the language and submit ASCO positions to the appropriate committee or agency.

- * Monitor regional economic issues and act as a liaison to other groups (eg., ACS, AACR, AACI, ASH, AMA, ASIM, ACCC, AARP) that monitor changes in standards of care regionally and locally and monitor managed care programs, third party insurers, and risk management consultants.

- * Work with the Clinical Practice Committee to identify and solve problems in the delivery of quality cancer care.

- * Prepare reports on activities for review by the Public Issues Committee and Clinical Practice Committee and the Board of Directors and for the ASCO newsletter.

- * Receive calls from ASCO members regarding problems related to the issues above and coordinate problem solving with appropriate committees or subcommittees.