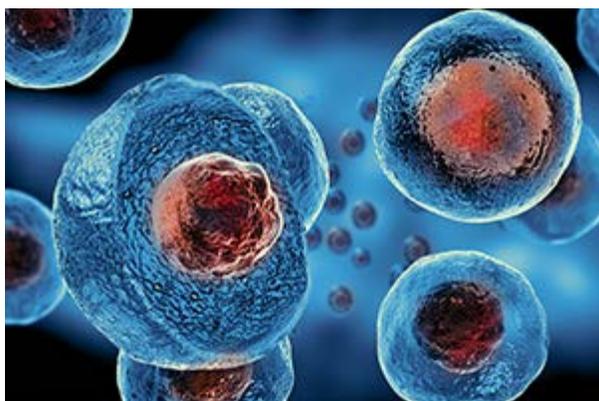




American Society of Human Genetics

ADVOCATE UPDATE

## ASHG Joins Leading Scientific Organizations in Opposing Restrictions on Fetal Tissue Research Funding



Last month, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a [statement](#) regarding a new policy on federally funded research using human fetal tissue acquired from elective abortions. New NIH intramural projects using human fetal tissue will no longer be conducted. Moving forward, new extramural grants involving human fetal tissue will require additional review by an ethics advisory board. In

response to this policy change, ASHG has signed onto [a multi-society letter](#) led by the International Society for Stem Cell Research (ISSCR) to HHS Secretary Azar in opposition to these restrictions, and also joined with our fellow FASEB societies [in expressing concern](#).

## House Passes Spending Bills for NIH & NSF

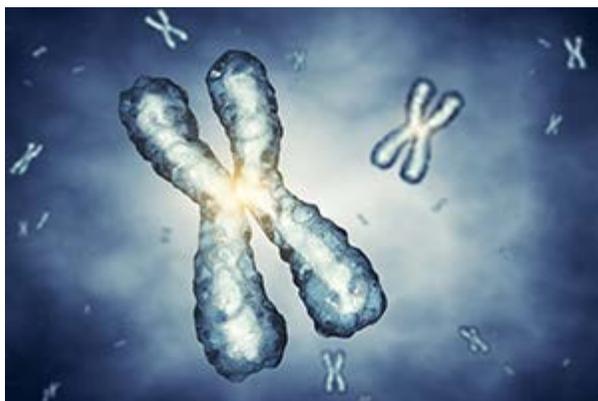
In June, the House passed two minibus spending packages, H.R. 2740 and H.R. 3055. H.R. 2740 allocated a \$41.1 billion budget for NIH for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, an increase of \$2 billion over FY



2019. In addition, an amendment was adopted under H.R. 2740 that would partially block the new HHS policy on human fetal tissue. H.R. 3055 provided NSF with \$8.6 billion, roughly \$561 million above FY 2019. ASHG remains hopeful that our [original ask of \\$41.6 billion](#) could be included as the Senate develops its own appropriations legislation in the coming weeks. Please contact your Senators and highlight the importance of NIH funding for your work.

**Take Action**

## ASHG Supports H.R. 3235, Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act



Representatives Dave Loebsack (D-IA) and Mike Kelly (R-PA) introduced H.R. 3235, the Access to Genetic Counselor Services Act of 2019 in the House. This legislation would improve access to genetic counseling by expanding coverage for Medicare beneficiaries and recognizing genetic counselors as Medicare practitioners. ASHG is proud to support the new bill, and to work alongside the [National Society of Genetic Counselors](#) (NSGC) in advocating for its passage by Congress. Please urge your representative in the House of Representatives to co-sponsor the bill!

**Take Action**

## Two Fundamental STEM Bills Head to House Floor



*Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) and Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK) of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology and lead cosponsors of the bills*

Following approval by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, two important STEM-related bills are ready to be considered by the House floor. [Endorsed by ASHG](#), H.R. 36, the Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act, incorporates policy recommendations to address and prevent sexual harassment in institutions receiving federal grants. H.R. 2528, the STEM Opportunities Act of 2019, would implement programs to ensure a diverse STEM workforce in federal science agencies and institutions receiving federal funding. ASHG will continue to monitor both bills and their progress in Congress.

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