



American Society of Human Genetics
ADVOCATE UPDATE

COVID-19 Relief Package Provides NSF with \$600 Million



President Biden has signed into law the latest, and largest to date, [COVID-19 relief package](#). The bill, primarily focused on economic relief and vaccine efforts, includes \$600 million for the NSF and \$1.75 billion for tracking and sequencing SARS-Cov-2. In addition, the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology [voted to report H.R. 144](#), the “Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act,” for consideration by the full House. The bill authorizes the

NSF to establish a two-year pilot program to award grants to early-career researchers to carry out an independent research program.

New ASHG Perspective

ASHG PERSPECTIVE

How science will help us move forward in 2021

In 2021, the genetics and genomics community needs to communicate to policymakers how the field of human genetics and genomics is transforming biomedical research and medicine, including its essential role in combatting COVID-19. This is important for ensuring that policies enable a thriving scientific enterprise and provide resources for research advances.

ASHG

has released a new [Perspective](#) in the latest issue of the *American Journal of Human Genetics (AJHG)*. The statement reiterates how important it is for the community to convey the impact of science and research on public health to policymakers. Additionally, the Society has joined the broader scientific community in endorsing the [Science and Technology Action Plan](#). The plan outlines several recommendations to the federal government to strengthen and revitalize the scientific enterprise.

ASHG Supports Confirmation of Eric Lander as OSTP Director



ASHG sent a letter to the leadership of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, in [support of the confirmation of Eric Lander, PhD](#), as the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). His confirmation hearing has not been scheduled yet. This week, following his confirmation hearings, the Senate is expected to vote on Xavier Becerra's nomination for Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). For more information, *Politico* has

updates on the latest [status of President Biden's Cabinet](#).

In Other News

- We are accepting [applications](#) through April 20, 2021, for the NHGRI/ASHG 2021-2022 Genetics and Public Policy Fellowship..
- NIH announced the launch of the [UNITE Initiative](#) to address structural racism within the biomedical research enterprise. The public can [submit comments](#) via the Request for Information (RFI).
- The International Commission on the Clinical Use of Human Germline Genome Editing announced that the [third international summit](#) will take place in London, UK on March 7-9, 2022.

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