



December 5, 2014

Francis Collins  
Director  
National Institutes of Health  
via email: [Francis.Collins@nih.hhs.gov](mailto:Francis.Collins@nih.hhs.gov)

Re: ODS Budget FY2015

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Dear Dr. Collins,

I am writing to request reconsideration of the reduction to the budget of the Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) for fiscal year 2015 based on my understanding that funding for ODS in FY 2015 was reduced by \$2 million dollars from the level provided to this essential office in FY 2014.

The American Herbal Products Association (AHPA) has worked closely with ODS since it was established in 1995. During this time AHPA has come to view the work that ODS performs as of great importance to the over 50 percent of Americans who use dietary supplements. This work includes the communications that ODS prepares for the public on its own, such as its nutrient recommendations and its fact sheets on individual supplements and product categories. Each of these provides accurate information that assist Americans to make informed decisions on the dietary supplements they purchase and use.

Of at least equal importance is the long-established practice at ODS to partner with other divisions within NIH and to provide financial support to other qualified institutions. As you are no doubt aware, ODS' extramural investments can be categorized into four broad areas: research support, research tools, communications, and science-policy interactions. In AHPA's view, each of these areas is essential to make sure that progress is made in increasing informed access to the best quality dietary supplement products that Americans have come to demand.

Even as I submit this request I understand that you must make difficult financial decisions to support the many and complex functions of all of the Centers and Offices of the National Institutes of Health. My request is intended to be respectful of your broader fiscal obligations at the same time that it communicates to you the value of work of the Office of Dietary Supplements.

I also recognize that it may be difficult to make budgetary revisions to this year's budget as we are already entering the third month of FY 2015. If my request cannot be met at this time I hope you will keep it in mind during next year's in financial planning and consider increasing the ODS budget for FY 2016 to at least its 2014 level. This

would ensure that ODS can continue its important work on behalf of the many Americans who use dietary supplements.

Please feel free to have anyone on your staff contact me if you would like to discuss the issues raise here in greater detail.

Sincerely,

*Michael McGuffin*

President, AHPA

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