



Phone: 512-454-0022

Fax: 512-454-0812

7801 N. Lamar Blvd., Suite D-89, Austin, Texas 78752-1038

E-mail: debbyrsa@sbcglobal.net

WebPage: www.RSoA.org

To the Membership of RSA:

The RSA leadership (Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and the Government Affairs and Advocacy Committee) have been expending great effort over the past couple of years to influence NIH activities surrounding discussions of a new institute – working title: National Institute of Substance Use and Addiction Disorders. These efforts have not diminished, but have in fact escalated in recent months, as NIH plans have been taking shape. I believe it is fair to say that we have had some influence; the issues that are now addressed when the institute comes up for discussion include many of the topics identified by the alcohol research community.

I am not writing at this point to repeat the RSA positions, but instead to offer guidance in connection with the recent NIH Request for Information (RFI) about planning for the new institute. Because a number of members have asked for suggestions about how to address this RFI, the Government Affairs and Advocacy Committee (GAAC) has prepared a model document suggesting topics that might be put forward by our membership. **This model is attached and is self-explanatory.** The general idea is to have a large representation from alcohol researchers as these comments are collected to forcefully represent ALL areas of alcohol research, to emphasize the widespread influence of alcohol use beyond the question of addiction, to emphasize the systems biology approach that has served the alcohol research community so well (that the best model for pursuing alcohol research includes all steps from early risk assessment to physical conditions that issue from excessive alcohol use), and to argue for funding allocations that fully and fairly reflect the health burden of alcohol use relative to those of tobacco and illicit drugs.

I encourage all RSA members to provide a thoughtful response to this RFI. We have many reasons to believe your input will make a difference. And, I would like to thank the GAAC for their great work in developing this model response.

Sincerely,

Mark S. Goldman

RSA President