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Bone and Mineral Research

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ASBMR 2024 Annual Meeting

September 27-30, 2024

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

Toronto, ON, Canada

December 18, 2023

The Honorable Dr. Jill Biden, First Lady of the United States
Dr. Carolyn Mazure, Chair, White House Initiative on Women's Health Research
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Drs. Biden and Mazure:

As leaders of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR), we applaud the White House Initiative on Women's Health Research. We wish to highlight the prevalence of musculoskeletal (MSK) diseases, of which osteoporosis and osteoarthritis are most common, on women's health. The social-economic impact of these diseases in terms of lost work time, wages and family caregiving are immense. Research funding for MSK diseases is disproportionate to their prevalence in the US population. We would like to work with you to address disparities in research funding, diagnosis, and treatment.

Here are some pertinent facts:

- 50% of the US population reports chronic MSK medical conditions (e.g., arthritis, back and neck pain, osteoporosis). Collectively these conditions are higher in the population than any other medical conditions including circulatory [42%], respiratory [24%], diabetes [9%], and cancer [9%]¹, yet NIH funding for MSK diseases is the smallest.²
- After the menopause, women are at a significantly higher risk of osteoporosis-related fractures than men³; 1 in 2 women will break a bone in their lifetime due to osteoporosis.^{4,5,6} There are more than 2 million fractures that could be prevented each year with access to available treatments.⁷
- 50% of women who sustain a hip fracture never walk independently again, 20% require permanent nursing home placement, and 25% of women die within a year of their injury, the causes of which remain unknown.⁷
- Latinas, especially Mexican Americans, are at a significantly higher risk for osteoporosis, with diagnoses 50% higher among Mexican American women than in white women.⁸

By investing in bone, joint and skeletal muscle research, we can improve the overall health and quality of life for millions of American women while also contributing to the broader goals of reducing healthcare costs and enhancing societal productivity. Further, understanding the unique challenges faced by women in the realm of musculoskeletal health will pave the way for more gender-inclusive and effective healthcare policies. ASBMR stands ready to

Page 2 – ASBMR Letter RE: White House Initiative on Women’s Health Research

assist you in addressing these urgent needs of women. Please contact us if you need additional information or access to world experts in the science and medicine of osteoporosis, osteoarthritis, or other diseases that affect women’s bone, joint and skeletal muscle health.

Sincerely,



Laura Calvi, MD
ASBMR President



Michael Hadjiargyrou, Ph.D.
Chair, ASBMR Advocacy & Science Policy Committee

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