May 14, 2014

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Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases  
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31 Center Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Lee Hall, MD, PhD  
Chief, Parasitology and International Programs Branch  
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Dear Dr. Fauci and Dr. Hall,

On behalf of the Entomological Society of America (ESA), I’d like to thank you for your World Malaria Day statement issued on April 25. ESA appreciates the National Institutes of Health’s recognition of the importance of research on mosquitoes – including studies conducted by entomologists – to advancing our ability to understand, prevent, and treat malaria.

As you know, malaria is a devastating disease that kills more than 600,000 people each year, making mosquitoes the “deadliest animal in the world,” an observation also brought to the public’s attention by Bill Gates on this year’s World Malaria Day. To help inform strategies for reducing the burden of malaria, entomologists are contributing their expertise to investigate the parasite-mosquito relationship, the molecular mechanisms of mosquito attraction and disease transmission, and the dynamics of mosquito populations. Research addressing entomology-related scientific questions like these is especially relevant to the development of improved methods for preventing disease spread and transmission.

In your role at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), you are well-aware that in addition to malaria, several arthropod-borne diseases such as dengue, West Nile virus, and Lyme disease are increasingly significant threats in the United States. ESA encourages NIAID to support a comprehensive approach to the study of all insect-borne diseases by including entomology research as a critical preventive component of NIAID’s infectious disease research portfolio.

ESA is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and individuals in related disciplines. Founded in 1889, ESA has almost 7,000 members affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry, and government.

Thank you again for your recent statement illustrating the crucial role of entomology in NIH’s efforts to address malaria. Please do not hesitate to contact ESA if we can be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Frank Zalom, PhD  
Distinguished Professor of Entomology, UC Davis  
2014 President, Entomological Society of America