



## International Drug Abuse Research Society (IDARS)



**Michael Kuhar**  
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Atlanta, GA, USA

**George Koob**  
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USA

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New Zealand

Newsletter Editor  
**Emmanuel Onaivi**  
NJ, USA

Website:  
[www.idars.org](http://www.idars.org)

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### A Call for Investment in Addiction and Mental Health Disorders Research by the International Drug Abuse Research Society (IDARS)

Dear Members of President-Elect Obama's Transition Team:

On behalf of the members of the International Drug Abuse Research Society (IDARS), we join the world in congratulating the President-Elect Obama and his team for his victory and the enormous expectation and mandate to improve the world. Our international research society (IDARS) is uniquely positioned to help with global social, medical and financial drain on society of drugs of abuse and to assess our needs for research. Drug abuse is a treatable and preventable brain disorder, and our focus is on basic research which is very much needed for the future prevention and treatment of drug abuse disorders.

We are excited by the prospects that the incoming administration will bring about global changes that will reduce the burden of mental health problems and drug addiction in our society. The cost to society of drug abuse disorders is prodigious, by some estimates up to 500 billion dollars per year in the United States alone (this includes, illicit drugs, tobacco and alcohol). Enormous savings in medical costs, incarceration costs and lost productivity can be obtained by implementing effective prevention and treatment strategies based on research. We are delighted that you will invest education, health care, energy, infrastructure and research. As the new administration embarks on saving our global economy, it is also important to reduce drug and alcohol addiction which puts such a heavy burden on our medical and penal systems.

We therefore call on President-Elect Obama and his team to help America continue to lead the world in innovative research in education, mental health and addiction research. Addiction, not only to nicotine (from smoking cigarettes) and alcohol, but also to illicit like and harder drugs like cocaine and heroin and food is becoming an epidemic. The burden to health services and society is enormous, and we will have to face the consequences of our failure to prevent our children from becoming drug addicts, obese or with mental disorders. Our global society, lead by USA, will function better with healthy minds as unprecedented discoveries are yet to come following the continuing successes such as our burgeoning understanding of the neurobiology of addiction, the human genome project, and the ongoing exciting and innovative translational studies of gene x environment interactions.

December 4, 2008

As we call for a huge investment in treatment and research - to reduce the burden of addiction, we wish President-Elect Obama's team success in executing the huge tasks ahead for the future of our children and grand children. Again, we offer our strongest support

With Every Good Wish

Michael J Kuhar, PhD  
President of IDARS  
Candler Professor of Neuropharmacology  
Georgia Research Alliance Eminent Scholar  
Emory University  
Atlanta, GA

George Koob, Ph.D  
President-Elect of IDARS  
Professor and Chair  
Committee on the Neurobiology of Addictive Disorders  
The Scripps Research Institute  
La Jolla, California.