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Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology

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FASEB EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT IN STEM CELL RULING

Bethesda, MD – The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) is profoundly disappointed in the Federal District Court injunction barring federal funds for human embryonic stem cell research. “The decision is a huge blow to potentially life-saving biomedical research,” said FASEB President, William T. Talman, M.D. Although research using human embryonic stem cells is still in the early stages, the potential of this work to yield treatments for devastating diseases is enormous. Embryonic stem cells are the gold standard of stem cell research. Their capacity for self-renewal and potential to develop into any of the more than 200 types of cells in the human body makes them invaluable in helping researchers understand both normal cell development and medical conditions that arise when normal processes are disrupted. Research on embryonic stem cells has already provided important insights into a host of diseases and conditions, including diabetes, spinal cord injury, and neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson’s disease.

“Prohibiting the use of federal funds for human embryonic stem cell research is a major set-back to research that holds promise for future cures. The ruling, if allowed to stand, unnecessarily delays development of new medical treatments and diminishes the hopes of millions of patients suffering from serious illnesses,” said Talman. He went on, “As a physician, I’ve watched helplessly as some of my patients with currently untreatable diseases have lost their ability to live full and fruitful lives and ultimately have lost their lives. I view it as unconscionable to take away that hope for cure.” FASEB is committed to seeing that federal funding for promising human embryonic stem cell research performed with appropriate ethical guidelines is restored.

FASEB is composed of 23 societies with more than 100,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB enhances the ability of scientists and engineers to improve—through their research—the health, well-being, and productivity of all people. Our mission is to advance health and welfare by promoting progress and education in biological and biomedical sciences through service to our member societies and collaborative advocacy.