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## **STATEMENT OF FASEB PRESIDENT, LEO FURCHT, MD, ON HOUSE PASSAGE OF THE STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT**

*Bethesda, MD* – “On behalf of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), I would like to thank the United States House of Representatives for passage of H.R. 3, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. For the second time, an overwhelmingly bipartisan majority of Representatives have affirmed their dedication to the promise of medical research and the scientific potential embodied by embryonic stem cells.

I wish to express particular gratitude to Representatives Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Mike Castle (R-DE) for their tireless leadership and passion in support of patients stricken with diabetes, Parkinson’s disease, spinal cord injuries, and other serious illnesses. Their commitment to ensuring embryonic stem cell research progresses within sound ethical guidelines has provided optimism to millions of Americans suffering from incurable conditions. As Congressman Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) so eloquently stated during today’s debate “Science is but another word for hope.”

On behalf of the 21 scientific societies and more than 80,000 researchers represented by FASEB, I respectfully urge the Senate follow the House’s lead in passing the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. We look forward to working with Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA), as well as our advocacy partners, in moving this bill forward. Today’s vote was the first step, but there is still work to do.

We have stood at this crossroads before and watched hope extinguished by the stroke of a pen through Presidential veto. As it is often impossible to predict where science will lead us, I cannot know what will happen in the weeks to come. I can only trust that the President, and our Congress, will do what is right for science, medicine, and the American people by expanding the NIH’s ability to fund embryonic stem cell research.”

*FASEB is composed of 21 societies with more than 80,000 members, making it the largest coalition of biomedical research associations in the United States. FASEB’s mission is to enhance the ability of biomedical and life scientists to improve—through their research—the health, well-being and productivity of all people. FASEB serves the interests of these scientists in those areas related to public policy, facilitates coalition activities among Member Societies and disseminates information on biological research through scientific conferences and publications.*