

March 5, 2003

The Honorable Judd Gregg
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the more than 60,000 biomedical research scientists represented by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), I am writing to urge the Senate to pass legislation to protect Americans from genetic discrimination by insurers and employers before April's announcement of the completion of the human genome.

The mapping of the human genome has unveiled a vast, new wealth of information. This data will one day reveal every person's genetic predisposition to a variety of differing diseases. It can be used as an important tool to prevent and treat disease. It can also be misused as a weapon to discriminate against individuals.

Current law does not provide sufficient protection against job loss, health insurance cancellation or denial of coverage as a result of genetic discrimination. We urge you to bridge the gap on remaining differences between alternative bills to pass a basic level of nondiscrimination protection for all Americans.

We thank you for your invaluable leadership on this, and many other important health and medical issues, and urge you to act in the next few weeks to set a floor of basic protections for all Americans from genetic discrimination.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Teitelbaum, MD
FASEB President