



April 28, 2004

The Honorable Michael Castle
U.S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
1530 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Reps. Castle and DeGette:

On behalf of AAAS, the largest general science society in the world, I would like to express appreciation for your consistent leadership and support of scientific research, including your efforts on behalf of research involving human stem cells.

In August 2001, AAAS issued a statement in response to the Administration's policy on federal funding of embryonic stem cell research, urging the President to reassess periodically its policy "so that changes may be made in order to realize to the fullest extent possible the benefits of this promising field of research" (www.aaas.org/spp/cstc/docs/01-08-17_stemstmt.htm). We are pleased, therefore, to support your efforts calling on the President to expand current federal policy to enable researchers to gain greater access to new embryonic stem cell lines.

Federal funding for all types of stem cell research is essential so that the scientific community can better understand the potential value and limitations of each type and so that all avenues of research can be pursued in search of cures for serious diseases. As scientists, we share the President's concern that stem cell research proceed in an ethical manner that engenders public confidence. We explored these and related matters in our 1999 report, *Stem Cell Research and Applications: Monitoring the Frontiers of Biomedical Research* (www.aaas.org/spp/sfrr/projects/stem/main.htm). As we stated then and continue to believe, it is only through federal support of research on all types of stem cells that we may be able to realize promising new treatments or cures.

Founded in 1848, AAAS has worked continuously to advance science for human well-being. The Association and its journal, *Science*, report nearly 130,000 individual and institutional subscribers, plus 265 affiliated organizations in more than 130 countries, serving a total of 10 million individuals.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner