February 21, 2003

Honorable Jim Greenwood  
United States House of Representatives  
2436 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Greenwood:

The Association of American Universities, which represents 62 leading public and private research universities, strongly supports H.R. 801, the *Cloning Prohibition Act of 2003*. Along with Representatives Peter Deutsch (D-FL), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Diana DeGette (D-CO), and Mark Kirk (R-IL), your leadership in protecting research using nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells is greatly appreciated.

AAU strongly opposes human reproductive cloning, and supports your bill's provisions to ban this practice. We generally do not support legislation to limit fields of research, but since some organizations have announced an intention to clone humans, we concur with the National Academy of Sciences that a legal ban is more likely to deter any attempt to clone a human than would any voluntary system or moratorium.

In contrast to human reproductive cloning, both basic and applied stem cell research continues to be supported by AAU. We therefore support nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells, also known as therapeutic cloning, since such research has considerable potential for advancing our fundamental knowledge and developing new medical therapies to treat debilitating diseases. As expressed in the attached resolution, which was adopted unanimously by the AAU membership on April 23, 2002, we therefore strongly support your bill's efforts to allow this important research to proceed while banning human reproductive cloning.

I applaud your leadership in sponsoring legislation that will allow researchers to
continue the investigation of stem cells produced by nuclear transplantation, which is the only way to assure that the value of this nascent technology is realized.

Cordially,

Nils Hasselmo
President

AAU Statement on Human Cloning

The Association of American Universities has a long history of supporting academic and scientific freedom. It also recognizes the importance of conducting research consistent with ethical, legal, and safety requirements.

AAU strongly opposes human reproductive cloning, and supports legislation to ban this practice. The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) has concluded that cloning procedures are currently not safe for humans and that no responsible scientists or physicians are likely to undertake to clone a human. We generally do not support legislation to limit fields of research, but since some organizations have announced an intention to clone humans, we concur with the NAS that a legal ban is more likely to deter any attempt to clone a human than would any voluntary system or moratorium. The ban should be reconsidered at five-year intervals, based on current scientific knowledge.

In contrast to human reproductive cloning, AAU continues to support both basic and applied stem cell research. AAU therefore supports nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells, also known as somatic cell nuclear transfer, as nonreproductive cloning, and as therapeutic cloning. AAU concurs with the NAS that nuclear transplantation to produce stem cells has considerable potential for advancing our fundamental knowledge and developing new medical therapies to treat debilitating diseases. Continuing the investigation of stem cells produced by nuclear transplantation is the only way to assure that the value of this nascent technology is realized. Before applications to humans should be considered, we need further study of cells derived from the process of nuclear transplantation, subject to federal safeguards. This research should proceed in parallel with other types of stem cell research, including human embryonic and adult stem cell research.

Adopted by the AAU Membership on April 23, 2002.