March 11, 2005

The Honorable Michael Castle
1233 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Diana DeGette
1527 Longworth House Office Building
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Castle and DeGette:

On behalf of the Association of American Universities, which represents 60 leading public and private research universities in the United States, I am writing to express support for H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, which you introduced on February 15, 2005.

AAU supports the intent of your legislation to allow federally supported researchers to use stem cell lines derived from embryos discarded by fertility clinics and, in effect, remove the restrictions imposed by President Bush in 2001 that limited federally funded stem cell research to stem cell lines derived before August 9, 2001.

Thank you for your sustained efforts to make stem cell research a priority in the United States. AAU fully supported H.R. 4682, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2004, as well as your letter sent last year to President Bush with 206 signatures from Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 58 U.S. Senators, and your letter sent in February to President Bush again urging him to expand or update the current stem cell policy.

AAU continues to offer you our full support in the 109th Congress. Please let me know if AAU can be of assistance in promoting your bill as an important step in expanding federal support for embryonic stem cell research.

Cordially,

Nils Hasselmo, President