Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to expand the current federal policy concerning embryonic stem cell research.

As you know, embryonic stem cells have the potential to be used to treat and better understand deadly and disabling diseases that affect more than 100 million Americans, such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, and many others.

Embryonic stem cells are derived from in vitro fertilized (IVF) embryos that are developed in excess of those needed for the process to allow infertile couples to have children. The IVF process results in more embryos than are needed by the couple. There are estimated to be more than 400,000 IVF embryos, which are currently frozen and will likely be destroyed if not donated, with informed consent of the couple, for research.

We very much appreciate your words of support for the enormous potential of this research, and we know that you intended your policy to help promote this research to its fullest. As you know, the Administration’s policy limits federal funding only to embryonic stem cells that were derived by August 9, 2001, the date of the policy announcement.

However, scientists have told us that since the policy went into effect more than two years ago, we have learned much more about why the embryonic stem cell lines eligible for federal funding will not be suitable to effectively promote this research. We therefore feel it is essential to relax the restrictions in the current policy for this research to be fully explored.

Among the current challenges with the current policy are the following:

- While it originally appeared that 78 embryonic stem cell lines would be available for research under the federal policy, now, more than two years after August 9, 2001, only 19 are available to researchers.
- All available stem cell lines are contaminated with mouse feeder cells, making their therapeutic use for humans uncertain.
- Scientists are reporting that it is increasingly difficult to attract new scientists to this area of research because of concerns that funding restrictions will keep this research from being successful.
Mr. President, we know that you have been a strong supporter of medical research and share our commitment to curing disease and alleviating human suffering. We would very much like to work with you to modify the current embryonic stem cell policy so that it provides this area of research the greatest opportunity to lead to the treatments and cures we all are hoping for.

Sincerely,

DIANA DEGETTE
Member of Congress

Randy "Duke" Cunningham
Member of Congress

THOMAS ALLEN
Member of Congress

JOHN DINGELL
Member of Congress

WILLIAM THOMAS
Member of Congress

STEVE ROYER
Member of Congress

MIKE CASTLE
Member of Congress

CALVIN DOOLY
Member of Congress

EDOLPHUS TOWNS
Member of Congress

NANCY PELOSI
Member of Congress

DON YOUNG
Member of Congress

JIM KOLBE
Member of Congress
CHARLES BASSE
Member of Congress

CAROLYN MALONE
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PETE STARK
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CAROLYN MCCARTHY
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BEN CARDIN
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HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress

CHAKA FATTAH
Member of Congress

GEORGE MILLER
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RICK BOUCHER
Member of Congress

ROBERT J. MURPHY
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JAN V. SCHAKOWSKY
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CHARLES RANGEL
Member of Congress

JERRY LEWIS
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HAROLD FORD
Member of Congress

SHERWOOD BOEHLERT
Member of Congress

MICHAEL MCNULTY
Member of Congress

HOWARD HERMAN
Member of Congress

EDWARD MARKEY
Member of Congress
BOBBY RUSH  Member of Congress

DENNIS MOORE  Member of Congress

MAXINE WATERS  Member of Congress

JOE BACA  Member of Congress

FRANK BALLANCE JR.  Member of Congress

ARTUR DAVIS  Member of Congress

DENNIS CARDOZA  Member of Congress

GENE GREEN  Member of Congress

WILLIAM CLAY JR.  Member of Congress

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JERRY &EVANS  Member of Congress

ADAM SCHIFF  Member of Congress

MIKE THOMPSON  Member of Congress

LYNN WOOLSEY  Member of Congress

SHEFFIE BURLINGTON  Member of Congress

BRAD CAHILL  Member of Congress

FRED W. THOMPSON  Member of Congress

BARRON FRANK  Member of Congress

WILLIAM CLAY JR.  Member of Congress

JERRY &EVANS  Member of Congress
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Martin Meehan
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Maxine Waters
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Martin O. Sabo
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Ellen Tauscher
Member of Congress

David Wu
Member of Congress

Jennifer Dunn
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Peter DeFazio
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Bart Gordon
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Denise L. Majette
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Vic Snyder
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Silvestre Reyes
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Jose Serrano
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Nydia Velazquez
Member of Congress

 Jeb Bradley
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Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress

Sam Farr
Member of Congress

Amory Houghton
Member of Congress
Wayne T. Gilchrest
Member of Congress

Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress

Hilda Solis
Member of Congress

Jesse Jackson Jr.
Member of Congress

Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress

Donna Christian-Christensen
Member of Congress

John Larson
Member of Congress

Sander Levin
Member of Congress

Karen McCarthy
Member of Congress

Jim Greenwood
Member of Congress

Susan Davis
Member of Congress

Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress

Robert Menendez
Member of Congress

Mark Kirk
Member of Congress

James Moran
Member of Congress

Donald Payne
Member of Congress

William Lipinski
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress
MARY Bono
Member of Congress

BENNIE THOMPSON
Member of Congress

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
Member of Congress

MELVIN WATT
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ROBERT WEXLER
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LUCILLE ROYAL-ALLARD
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JANE HARMAN
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CAROLYN KILPATRICK
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BERNARD SANDERS
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JOHN SPRATT
Member of Congress

TOM UDALL
Member of Congress

DIANE WATSON
Member of Congress

ANTHONY WEINER
Member of Congress

ALBERT WYNN
Member of Congress

ALCEE HASTINGS
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JOHN CONYERS
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BOBBY SCOTT
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KENDRICK MEEEK
Member of Congress
JULIA CARSON  
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KAY GRANGER  
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EARL POMEROY  
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EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON  
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JAMES MCGOVERN  
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GINNY BROWN WAITE  
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BOB ETHERIDGE  
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JOHN SWEENEY  
Member of Congress

KEN CALVERT  
Member of Congress

CHARLES STENHOLM  
Member of Congress