

*American Council on Education*  
*Association of American Universities*  
*National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges*

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March 26, 2001

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

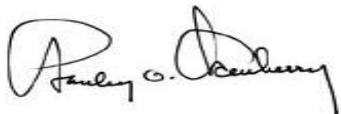
Dear President Bush:

Attached is a letter that our three associations, joined by 112 college and university presidents and chancellors, have written to Secretary Thompson. The letter urges him to permit the current National Institutes of Health guidelines governing stem cell research to remain in effect, since he is conducting the review of this research that you have requested.

We wanted to provide you with a copy of this letter so that you would be aware of our support for the NIH guidelines. This is a critical issue, as the potential of stem cell research for relieving human illness and suffering is enormous.

Thank you for carefully considering this matter, which is of concern to research universities throughout the United States.

Cordially,



Stanley O. Ikenberry  
President  
American Council on Education



C. Peter Magrath  
President  
National Association of State Universities and  
Land-Grant Colleges



Nils Hasselmo  
President  
Association of American Universities

cc: Vice President Dick Cheney  
Secretary Tommy Thompson

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March 26, 2001

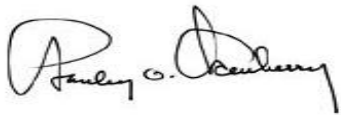
Dear Representative/Senator:

Our three associations, joined by 112 college and university presidents and chancellors, have written to Secretary Thompson to urge him to permit the current National Institutes of Health guidelines governing stem cell research to remain in effect.

We wanted to provide you with a copy of this letter so that you would be aware of our support for the NIH guidelines. We have also sent copies of the letter to President Bush and Vice President Cheney. This is a critical issue, as the potential of stem cell research for relieving human illness and suffering is enormous.

Thank you for carefully considering this matter, which is of concern to research universities throughout the United States.

Cordially,



Stanley O. Ikenberry  
President  
American Council on Education



C. Peter Magrath  
President  
National Association of State Universities and  
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Nils Hasselmo  
President  
Association of American Universities

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March 26, 2001

The Honorable Tommy Thompson  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Our three associations, joined by the 112 college and university presidents and chancellors listed below, are writing to urge you to permit the current National Institutes of Health guidelines governing human pluripotent stem cell research to remain in effect.

Along with patient groups, scientists, and research institutions, we believe that the discovery of human pluripotent stem cells is one of the most promising biomedical developments in years, and that stem cell research holds exceptional promise for developing cures or treatments for many dread diseases, including Alzheimer's, diabetes, Parkinson's, spinal cord injury, cancer, and heart disease. We believe that the stringent guidelines that NIH developed last year provide the appropriate federal oversight and standards that will allow this research to flourish in an ethically rigorous manner.

Some opponents of this research argue that adult stem cells provide sufficient research opportunities, and that research on pluripotent stem cells need not proceed. A group of 80 Nobel laureates eloquently addressed this concern in a letter dated February 22, 2001, to President Bush, saying:

It is premature to conclude that adult stem cells have the same potential as embryonic stem cells -- and that potential will almost certainly vary from disease to disease. Current evidence suggests that adult stem cells have markedly restricted differentiation potential. Therefore, for disorders that prove not to be treatable with adult stem cells, impeding human pluripotent stem cell research risks unnecessary delay for millions of patients who may die or endure needless suffering while the effectiveness of adult stem cells is evaluated.

As the Nobelists go on to say,

The therapeutic promise of pluripotent stem cells is based on more than two decades of research in mice and other animal models. This research confirms that pluripotent stem cells are capable of generating all of the cell types of the body. Most importantly, the therapeutic potential of these cells has already been demonstrated...Nerve cells have successfully reversed the progression of the equivalent of multiple sclerosis in mice and have restored function to the limbs of partially paralyzed rats; and insulin-secreting cells have normalized blood glucose in diabetic mice. These findings suggest that therapies using these cells may one day provide important new strategies for the treatment for a host of currently untreatable disorders.

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The Honorable Tommy Thompson

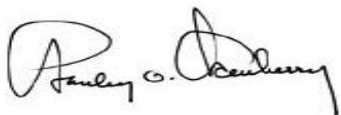
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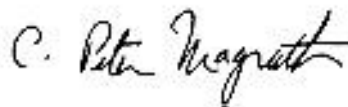
The promise of this research is real but we would not urge federal support for it without first exploring all of the ethical issues and being satisfied that adequate safeguards are in place. We agree with the National Bioethics Advisory Commission report of September 1999, which concluded that, on balance, this research should proceed with public funding. We also believe that the guidelines developed by the NIH will ensure that this research is conducted in an ethical manner.

As your department proceeds with your review of the NIH guidelines, we therefore urge you to allow federally funded research on human pluripotent stem cells to proceed by maintaining these guidelines – thus allowing the potential of these stem cells for relieving human pain and suffering to be unleashed.

Cordially,



Stanley O. Ikenberry  
President  
American Council on Education



C. Peter Magrath  
President  
National Association of State Universities and  
Land-Grant Colleges



Nils Hasselmo  
President  
Association of American Universities

The other signatories to this letter include:

Lattie F. Coor—President, Arizona State University  
Ralph D. Feigin— President, Baylor College of Medicine  
Jehuda Reinharz—President, Brandeis University  
Sheila Blumstein—Interim President, Brown University  
David Baltimore—President, California Institute of Technology

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James M. Rosser—President, California State University, Los Angeles

Jared L. Cohon—President, Carnegie Mellon University

David H. Auston—President, Case Western Reserve University

Stanford A. Roman, Jr.—Interim President, City University of New York City College

Albert C. Yates—President, Colorado State University

George Rupp—President, Columbia University

Hunter R. Rawlings, III—President, Cornell University

Nannerl O. Keohane—President, Duke University

Richard R. Eakin—Chancellor, East Carolina University

J. Sumner Bell—President, Eastern Virginia Medical School

William M. Chace—President, Emory University

Talbot D'Alemberte—President, Florida State University

Stephen J. Trachtenberg—President, George Washington University

G. Wayne Clough—President, Georgia Institute of Technology

Carl V. Patton—President, Georgia State University

Neil Rudenstine—President, Harvard University

Myles Brand—President, Indiana University

Richard Seagrave—Interim President, Iowa State University

Ronald Mason—President, Jackson State University

William R. Brody—President, The Johns Hopkins University

Mark A. Emmert—Chancellor, Louisiana State University & A&M College

Mary Ella Sanders—Interim Chancellor, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center

Charles M. Vest—President, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

T. Michael Bolger—President, Medical College of Wisconsin

John Maupin, Jr.—President, Meharry Medical College

Geoffrey L. Gamble—President, Montana State University—Bozeman

Arthur Rubenstein—Dean, Mount Sinai School of Medicine of CUNY

Mary Anne Fox—Chancellor, North Carolina State University

Richard M. Freeland—President, Northeastern University

Henry S. Bienen—President, Northwestern University

Martin C. Jischke—President, Purdue University

Arnold Levine—President, Rockefeller University

Francis L. Lawrence—President, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Stephen L. Weber—President, San Diego State University

Robert A. Corrigan—President, San Francisco State University

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John L. Hennessy—President, Stanford University

Karen R. Hitchcock—President, University at Albany- The State University of New York

William R. Greiner—President, University at Buffalo-The State University of New York

Shirley S. Kenny—President, State University of New York Health Science Center at Stony Brook

Kenneth A. Shaw—Chancellor and President, Syracuse University

David W. Adamany—President, Temple University

Ray M. Bowen—President, Texas A&M University

J. Jay Noren—President, Texas A&M University Health Science Center

John DiBiaggio—President, Tufts University

Scott S. Cowen—President, Tulane University

W. Ann Reynolds—President, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Peter Likins—President, The University of Arizona

John White—Chancellor, University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

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Robert M. Berdahl—Chancellor, University of California, Berkeley

Larry N. Vanderhoef—Chancellor, University of California, Davis

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Raymond L. Orbach—Chancellor, University of California, Riverside

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J. Michael Bishop—Chancellor, University of California, San Francisco

Henry T. Yang—Chancellor, University of California, Santa Barbara

M.R.C. Greenwood—Chancellor, University of California, Santa Cruz

Don Michael Randel—President, University of Chicago

Joseph A. Steger—President, University of Cincinnati

Elizabeth Hoffman—President, University of Colorado System

Richard L. Byyny—Chancellor, University of Colorado at Boulder

James H. Shore—Chancellor, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center

Charles E. Young—President, University of Florida

Michael F. Adams—President, University of Georgia

Kenneth P. Mortimer—President and Chancellor, University of Hawaii at Manoa

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James Stukel—President, University of Illinois

Sylvia Manning—Chancellor, University of Illinois at Chicago

Michael Aiken—Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Mary Sue Coleman—President, University of Iowa

Charles T. Wethington—President, University of Kentucky

Emery Wilson—Dean, University of Kentucky College of Medicine

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Irvin D. Reid—President, Wayne State University

Richard C. Levin—President, Yale University