

News Release

For immediate release

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American Diabetes Association: Senate Should Send White House Strong Message of Support for Embryonic Stem Cell Research

ADA urges U.S. Senate to pass Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act; legislation offers great hope to advance search for a diabetes cure

Alexandria, VA (April 9, 2007) – The American Diabetes Association (ADA) – the nation’s leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy – today urged the U.S. Senate to pass, with broad bipartisan support, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act (S.5). The ADA is a strong supporter of the legislation, which would accelerate stem cell research by easing existing restrictions and supporting research that uses embryonic stem cells, while maintaining strict ethical guidelines. Congress passed the legislation last year, but was unable to overcome President Bush’s veto. In January, the House of Representatives passed the legislation.

“The Senate this week has an opportunity to send a strong, clear message that this will be the year that the federal government lifts its damaging restrictions on stem cell research, which offers great potential for a cure for diabetes and other debilitating diseases,” said Darlene Cain, Chair of the American Diabetes Association. “Nearly 21 million American children and adults have waited too long for this research to progress. Now is the time to give researchers the full opportunity and resources to make advancements toward a cure.”

Federal regulations that President Bush announced in 2001 have restricted the number of human embryonic stem cell lines available for federally-funded research, and attempted usage of those lines has demonstrated that the number of adequate lines is even smaller due to contamination. Since 2001, scientists have discovered much better methods of deriving stem cell lines so that they do not face the same contamination issues. A significant expansion in the number of available lines is necessary in order to fully reap the medical rewards of stem cell research.

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Diabetes Information

call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383)
online www.diabetes.org
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The Mission of the American

Diabetes Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

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Stem cell research allows scientists to better explore how to control and direct stem cells so they can grow into other cells, such as insulin-producing beta cells found in the pancreas. Creating new beta cells could mean a cure for type 1 diabetes as they would serve as a replenishable source of cells for islet cell transplantation. They could also provide a powerful tool for controlling type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is one of the nation's most prevalent, debilitating and costly diseases. Nearly 21 million American children and adults have diabetes, up from 18 million when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last measured diabetes prevalence in 2003. If present trends continue, one in three Americans, and one in two minorities, born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime. The cost of diabetes in the U.S. in 2002 was at least \$132 billion.

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy. The Association's advocacy efforts include helping to combat discrimination against people with diabetes; advocating for the increase of federal diabetes research and programs; and improved access to, and quality of, healthcare for people with diabetes. The Association's mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. Founded in 1940, the Association provides service to hundreds of communities across the country. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit www.diabetes.org. Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.

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