

ACP

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*

October 11, 2007

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Snowe and Kennedy:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), representing 124,000 internal medicine physicians and medical students, I am writing to thank you and your colleagues on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee for your strong support for S. 358, the "Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act" and to urge you to bring this important legislation before the full Senate for a vote.

The Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act (GINA) would provide federal protection against the use of genetic information to discriminate against an individual in decisions concerning employment and insurability. GINA would also cover the gaps in protection not currently offered by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations, such as prohibiting using genetic information as a basis for charging covered groups larger premiums for health insurance if one or more members of that group tests positive for a genetic trait that may indicate susceptibility to certain diseases and limiting the disclosure of genetic information by insurers.

Fears of genetic discrimination have a negative impact on medical research and clinical care, as well as on patient health and financial well-being, public health and scientific advancements. By providing federal protection against such discrimination, GINA could significantly help reduce the American public's fears over the potential misuse of genetic information.

The Senate unanimously passed GINA during the 108th and 109th Congress but has yet to schedule a vote before the full Senate in the 110th Congress. On April 25, 2007, the House of Representatives passed GINA by a vote of 420-3, and President Bush has indicated his willingness to sign this legislation. Again, on behalf of the American College of Physicians, I thank you for your strong support for GINA and urge you to bring this bill before full Senate as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



David C. Dale, MD, FACP

Cc: The Honorable Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Richard Durbin