

November 11, 2003

(Letter sent to the entire House of Representatives)

**THE
CATHOLIC HEALTH
ASSOCIATION**
OF THE UNITED STATES

Dear Representative:

Earlier this month, the Senate overwhelmingly passed the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2003 (S 1053). The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA), the national leadership organization of more than 2,000 Catholic health care sponsors, systems, facilities, and related organizations, strongly supports this legislation and urges you and your colleagues to take action on this vital initiative.

The Genetic Information and Nondiscrimination Act of 2003 is an important compliment to other federal and state laws that recognize the need to protect individual's genetic information from being used in a discriminatory manner in the health insurance and employment markets.

Specifically, the bill would

- Prohibit health insurers from restricting enrollment or adjusting fees on the basis of predictive genetic information.
- Bar health insurers and employers from requiring genetic testing and from obtaining predictive genetic information.
- Prevent employers from discriminating based on genetic information in all areas of employment, including hiring and compensation.

Genetic science has seen marvelous growth over the past several years, and Catholic social teaching validates its use when respect for personal dignity, defense of human life, and support of the common good is its goal. CHA stands ready to support any legislation that reflects this principle and appreciates your efforts in protecting the use of genetic information for this purpose.

Sincerely,



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