

## ASIP Public Affairs

[2002 Senator Feinstein Letter/"Human Cloning Prohibition Act," S.1758](#)

January 24, 2002

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

Recent reports in the media have again raised public concerns about human cloning. We share the concerns of the Congress and the American people about human reproductive cloning, where the goal is implantation, gestation and subsequent birth of a cloned human being.

However, any legislative ban on human cloning must not prohibit therapeutic cloning. This technology employs somatic cell nuclear transfer, a technique that has enormous potential to treat human diseases and repair damaged tissues or organs. The undersigned organizations therefore endorse the "Human Cloning Prohibition Act," S.1758, that bans reproductive human cloning but permits the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer for therapeutic and scientific purposes.

Somatic cell nuclear transfer – where the nucleus of one cell is removed and replaced with the nucleus of a specialized cell – can be used to produce stem cells that may be used for therapeutic purposes. This technology has the potential to generate large numbers of cells which can then differentiate into many different cell types, such as neurons to treat Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease, pancreatic islet cells to treat diabetes or cardiomyocytes (heart muscle cells) to repair the damaged heart. These techniques may also make it possible to create cells that have the same genetic makeup as an individual; this would offer patients a source of transplanted cells that would not be subject to immune rejection. The potential for treating human disease in this exciting area of regenerative medicine is enormous.

We view human reproductive cloning as an unethical and irresponsible act in that it poses considerable safety concerns from a scientific and medical perspective. There should be severe penalties for anyone who attempts to do this. However legislation must not prohibit the use of human somatic cell nuclear transfer technology to produce molecules, cells, and tissues for research and therapeutic use. We applaud you and the other co-sponsors of S.1758 for your carefully worded bill which should expedite the development of therapies for millions of Americans.

Sincerely,  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
American Academy of Optometry  
American Association of Anatomists  
American Association of Immunologists  
American Pediatric Society  
American Physiological Society  
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

American Society for Clinical Nutrition  
American Society of Hematology  
American Society for Investigative Pathology  
American Society for Nutritional Sciences  
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs  
Bay Area Bioscience Center  
Biophysical Society  
Coriell Institute for Medical Research  
Environmental Mutagen Society  
Gerontological Society of America  
National Caucus of Basic Biomedical Science Chairs  
Society for Pediatric Research  
Wisconsin Association for Biomedical Research and Education

Cc: Senator Thomas A. Daschle  
Senator Tom Harkin  
Senator Arlen Specter  
Senator Bill Frist