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The American Physiological Society/Alice W. Ra'anan

-----Original Message-----

From: Alice Raanan [SMTP:Araanan@aps.faseb.org]

Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2000 10:41 AM

To: linda.therkorn@uspto.gov

Subject: comments on gene patenting

To the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office:

The American Physiological Society supports the view as advocated by the National Institutes of Health that genes ought to be patented only when the complete sequence is known and a function of the gene product has been determined.

The APS is a scientific association that was founded in 1887 and is dedicated to integrating life sciences research and education from the molecule to the whole organism. The APS membership currently numbers more than 9,000, and one area of our members' particular interest is the emerging field of physiological genomics, which is the study of how genetic traits are expressed in the physiological functions of an organism.

The APS is concerned if the PTO permits the patenting of gene segments, including those identified only by expressed sequence tags (ESTs), this will impede efforts to produce a more complete characterization of genes and will also delay or restrict the commercial exploration of such genes for the public good. The APS therefore supports the position of the National Institutes of Health and urges the PTO to apply high standards of "specific, substantial, and credible" evidence in conferring patents to DNA sequences.

Alice W. Ra'anan

Public Affairs Officer

The American Physiological Society

<http://www.faseb.org/aps/pahome.htm>