



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

NOV - 8 2005

Reed V. Tuckson, M.D.
Chair
Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetics, Health, and Society
NIH Office of Biotechnology Activities
6705 Rockledge Drive, Suite 750
Bethesda, MD 20892

Dear Dr. Tuckson:

I am writing to thank you and the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetics, Health, and Society (SACGHS) for your correspondence on the need for passage of Federal genetic nondiscrimination legislation. The materials you provided—the compilation of public comments, the video of personal stories, and the analysis of current law—will be very helpful in advancing efforts to support the passage of such legislation. Public concern about genetic discrimination is an extremely important issue at the intersection of genetics, health and society, and I appreciate the Committee's well-informed guidance and advice in this area.

It is clear from the testimonies you heard that the public is concerned about the potential for genetic discrimination in health insurance and employment and that their fears have the potential to affect their health care decisions and their willingness to participate in genetics research. The personal stories you gathered are emotionally compelling, and I commend you for recording them for a wider audience.

As you know, the Administration favors enactment of genetic nondiscrimination legislation, and I am committed to working with Congress and relevant stakeholders to achieve the timely passage of appropriate Federal genetic nondiscrimination legislation.

Thank you again for your input on this critical issue and for all of the work you are doing to address priority issues at the intersection of genetics, health, and society. I especially commend your efforts to gather public perspectives on this issue and your commitment to the public interest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael O. Leavitt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "L".

Michael O. Leavitt