



February 16, 2005
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

S. 306 – Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2005

(Sen. Snowe (R) ME and 19 cosponsors)

The Administration favors enactment of legislation to prohibit the improper use of genetic information in health insurance and employment. The Administration supports Senate passage of S. 306 as reported, which would prohibit group health plans and health insurers from denying coverage to a healthy individual or charging that person higher premiums based solely on a genetic predisposition to developing a disease in the future. The legislation also would bar employers from using individuals' genetic information when making hiring, firing, job placement, or promotion decisions.

The mapping of the human genome has led to more information about diseases and a better understanding of our genetic code. Scientists are pursuing new diagnostics, treatments, and cures based on this information, but the potential misuse of this information raises serious moral and legal issues. Concern about unwarranted use of genetic information threatens access to utilization of existing genetic tests as well as the ability to conduct further research. The Administration wants to work with Congress to make genetic discrimination illegal and provide individuals with fair, reasonable protections against improper use of their genetic information.

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