



# News Release

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**Contact:** Macon Morehouse (202-724-3303; [mmorehouse@aap.org](mailto:mmorehouse@aap.org))

## AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS APPLAUDS SENATE PASSAGE OF THE GENETIC INFORMATION NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which represents 60,000 pediatricians, today praised the U.S. Senate for passing the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act (GINA), landmark legislation to protect families and children from genetic discrimination.

“In the 13 years since GINA was first introduced in Congress, as many as 1,200 genetic tests have been developed—creating new opportunities for parents to learn if they or their children have a genetic risk for diseases such as diabetes or cancer and, in some cases, allowing them to take the preventative steps needed to stay healthy,” said AAP President Renée R. Jenkins, MD, FAAP. “Once GINA becomes law, parents will be able to make these critical health care decisions without putting their jobs and their family’s health insurance coverage at risk.”

GINA would bar health insurers from using genetic information as the basis for dropping coverage, raising rates or changing a family’s health policy options. It also would bar employers from using this information to fire someone with a genetic risk for disease, or to change the terms of their job or benefits.

“Too many children—some 9 million—already are uninsured,” Jenkins said. “Genetic discrimination must not become yet another barrier to access to health care. Genetic medicine has the potential to transform health care, but it cannot fulfill that promise until we have banned genetic discrimination.

“I urge Congress to send this bill to President Bush for his signature as soon as possible,” Jenkins added. “GINA is needed to ensure families are not discriminated against now and that their children grow up healthy and able to lead fruitful, productive lives without fear of future job or health insurance discrimination.”

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*The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of 60,000 primary care pediatricians, pediatric medical subspecialists and pediatric surgical specialists dedicated to the health, safety and well being of infants, children, adolescents and young adults.*