



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ACLA APPLAUDS SENATE PASSAGE OF
“GENETIC INFORMATION NONDISCRIMINATION ACT”**

Washington, DC -- The American Clinical Laboratory Association (ACLA) applauds the United States Senate for unanimously passing the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA). The approval of GINA by the Senate clears the way for the enactment of this landmark legislation, which will ensure that all genetic information will be protected against misuse in health insurance and employment. The bill will now go to the President's desk. It is expected that he will sign it, ending more than ten years' consideration of this important issue.

“Passage of this landmark legislation will go a long way to reassuring patients that their genetic testing information is confidential and protected against misuse,” said Alan Mertz, President of ACLA. “Spectacular innovation in genetic testing is playing an increasingly critical role in transforming our health care system in the direction of ‘personalized medicine.’ This legislation is needed to remove a key obstacle to this much-heralded transformation.”

ACLA has participated as a member of the Coalition for Genetic Fairness and assisted in working to educate Congressional policymakers and staff about the importance of legal protections for genetic information, and ensure passage of meaningful genetic information non-discrimination legislation.

The House of Representatives passed GINA legislation in April 2007 and again in March 2008. The bill had been held up in the Senate for the past year as issues around pre-existing condition exemptions and creating a ‘firewall’ between employers and employer-sponsored health plans in terms of liability under the legislation were being resolved. These issues have been resolved in amendments to the House and Senate bills.

ACLA represents local, regional, and national clinical laboratories throughout the United States.

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