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March 21, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

FILE COPY

Dear President Bush:

In April 2003, the International Human Genome Sequencing Consortium, led in the U.S. by the National Human Genome Research Institute and the Department of Energy, will announce the completion of the sequence of the human genome. This historic milestone represents the fulfillment of all of the original goals of the Human Genome Project, started during the presidency of your father. April 25, 2003 also marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of James Watson and Francis Crick's scientific paper describing the structure of the DNA double-helix.

Important developments in genetic science and technology have been made in the five decades since the landmark discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA. The Human Genome Project, begun in the United States in 1990, has now completed decoding all the chapters of the instruction book of human life. Together with our international partners, we have provided this information free to the world via the World Wide Web. This information has already fostered countless biomedical research discoveries that have led to improved health throughout the world.

To recognize these two historic accomplishments, we propose that you sign a proclamation designating April 2003 as "Genome Month" and April 25, 2003 as "DNA Day." The finished human genome sequence, a landmark scientific achievement with broad medical applications, warrants such a public statement from the President of the country that organized and led this project.

We believe this is an excellent opportunity to inform the American public of the value of federal investment in vital basic biomedical research. A draft proclamation is enclosed for your consideration.

Please let me know if you are willing to support this proposal. With deep gratitude,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis S. Collins".

Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D.
Director