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Gives Hope to 100 Million Americans Affected by Debilitating or
Life-Threatening Diseases and Their Families

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Washington, D.C. — As part of the First 100 Hours agenda, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui joined Democrats and Republicans in voting to expand federal funding for life-saving stem cell research under the DeGette-Castle Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act (H.R. 3). She expressed her support of expanding this critical research in the following statement: "Today is a day of hope for all Americans. Members of Congress, from both sides of the aisle, joined together to put patients first," stated Congresswoman Matsui. "The American people spoke clearly this past November supporting the promise of embryonic stem cell legislation and it is fitting that the House in the 110th Congress made its passage a priority of its first 100 hours." Continued Congresswoman Matsui, "today's action provides long-overdue support to researchers all across America, including those at the UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento. These new ethical guidelines will significantly increase federal support for new treatments and cures for the more than 100 million Americans who suffer from cancer, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, diabetes, spinal cord injuries and other debilitating diseases and disorders. It also reasserts America's role as the world's leader in medical research and innovation. "Sacramentans and Americans all across the country support scientific funding and the use of embryonic stem cells to provide not only hope, but concrete cures to some of our most debilitating diseases. I was pleased to work with a strong, bipartisan coalition of lawmakers to pass this legislation. It is long-past time that this groundbreaking research is allowed to move forward." The DeGette-Castle bill would expand the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research by lifting the restrictions on the embryonic stem cell lines which can be used for federally-funded research — restrictions that were imposed by President Bush in 2001. Most of the stem cell lines authorized for federally-funded research under the President's policy are now no longer useful for research. However, the bill only authorizes federal research funds for stem cell lines generated from embryos that would otherwise be discarded by fertility clinics. The DeGette-Castle bill also creates an ethical framework that must be followed in conducting this research under the guidance of the National Institutes of Health. This bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives in May of 2005 and the U.S. Senate in July 2006, but was vetoed by President Bush. Earlier today, H.R. 3 passed the House by an even stronger bipartisan vote of 253 to 174.

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