

Sample Letter for U.S. Senators

(INSERT Date)

The Honorable (INSERT Senator's Full Name)
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (INSERT Last Name):

I am writing to ask that you join me and others in our state in the fight against Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), better known as Lou Gehrig's disease, by cosponsoring S. 471, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005 and urging the Senate leadership to schedule a vote on this important legislation. The House passed the companion bill to S. 471 on May 24 by a bipartisan vote of 238-194.

I strongly support the expansion of the Administration's stem cell policy, which will prove to be vital in allowing scientists to fully develop the promise of embryonic stem cell research. Introduced by Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA), and cosponsored by more than 30 Senators, S. 471 would expand ethically our nation's stem cell policy and permit the use of embryos originally created for fertility treatment upon the consent of those individuals for whom the embryos were created.

S. 471 would enable researchers to explore the promise and potential that stem cells have to offer. This is critically important for a disease such as ALS, for we currently do not know what causes ALS or how it can be prevented or cured. Moreover, only one drug, approved by the FDA in late 1995, currently is available to treat ALS. But we may be able to change this by expanding the research that is necessary to find treatments and a cure for ALS.

ALS is a progressive, fatal neurodegenerative disease that attacks nerve cells and pathways in the brain and spinal cord, ultimately resulting in a loss of voluntary muscle control, paralysis and death. The average life expectancy for people with ALS is two to five years from the time of diagnosis. But what makes ALS particularly devastating is that as people progressively lose the ability to walk, move their arms, talk and even breathe, their minds remain sharp; aware of the limits ALS has imposed on their lives. And as people with ALS, their families and caregivers continue their fight against the disease, each day they hold onto the hope that our nation will find effective treatments and a cure for ALS.

The thousands of Americans suffering from ALS are engaged in a race against time. It is our responsibility to make sure that they benefit as quickly as possible from the very best that science and technology has to offer. Given the enormous scientific potential of human embryonic stem cells, I ask you to cosponsor S. 471, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, and urge the Senate leadership to schedule a vote on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Name (printed):
Address:
City, State, Zip Code: