



For Immediate Release: October 24, 2007

**Statement by City of San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders
to Convention Center Attendees, Exhibitors and Event Organizers**

San Diego, CA: "Public safety and responding to these devastating fires continue to be our top priority," said Mayor Sanders, "however we encourage those who are scheduled to attend events at the Convention Center to move forward with their plans."

The downtown area where the Convention Center, hotels, restaurants and shops utilized by convention attendees remain open for business and are not in any way threatened by the fires. While some haze remains in the air, the air quality in the downtown area has been rated as "GOOD" by the San Diego County air quality control officials. Updates are being posted regularly at www.visitsandiego.com.

The American Society for Human Genetics (ASHG) annual meeting is currently underway at the Convention Center through Saturday, October 27. Attendees at the ASHG annual meeting, expected to attract more than 6,000 individuals housed in approximately 2500 downtown hotel rooms, have taken several steps in response to the fires.

- Meeting organizers asked attendees and show staff to double-up on hotel rooms in order to free additional hotel rooms to accommodate evacuees.
- Medical personnel attending the show have offered to volunteer at local shelters as needed to assist with medical needs of those impacted.
- ASHG has established an emergency relief fund for its members to provide additional financial support to help with relief efforts in San Diego. Information can be accessed at www.ashg.org.

"The City of San Diego and the hundreds of thousands of individuals directly impacted by these devastating fires are profoundly grateful for the outpouring of support from attendees, exhibitors and event planners who are attending events at the San Diego Convention Center," said Mayor Sanders. "The economic impact and tax revenues generated by conventions and meetings hosted at the Convention Center and area hotels are an essential component of our financial health and our ability to ensure public safety officials have the resources they need to respond to tragic events such as these," added Mayor Sanders.