

News

Congress Passes Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

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The US House of Representatives has passed the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) by a vote of 414-1, building on the momentum of a unanimous Senate vote to approve the legislation.

The legislation aims to protect the privacy of Americans' personal genetic information and prevent it from being misused by health insurance companies and employers to discriminate against individuals based on their genetic makeup.

The legislation will be the first of its kind to prohibit employers and health insurers from discriminating against individuals on the basis of their personal genetic information after President Bush signs the bill into law.

"With the long-awaited federal passage of GINA, researchers and clinicians can now actively encourage Americans to participate in clinical trials without the fear of genetic discrimination," said Joann Boughman, PhD, executive VP of the [American Society of Human Genetics](#). "Under the federal protection provided by GINA, health care practitioners will be able to recommend appropriate genetic testing and screening procedures unencumbered by the fear of discrimination based upon the results."

Sharon Terry, who serves as president of both the Genetic Alliance and the Coalition for Genetic Fairness said, "We are all so grateful to our champions in the House for their perseverance and dedication. We now look towards the signing of GINA into law."

[Source: [American Society of Human Genetics](#)]