

Preventing Genetic Discrimination

The House passed legislation on April 25 to protect personal genetic information from discriminatory use by health insurers and employers. By an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 420-3, the House approved the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2007 (H.R. 493), introduced in January by Reps. Louise Slaughter and Judy Biggert. The legislation would prohibit employers from using individuals' genetic information when making hiring, firing, job placement or promotion decisions. It would also make it illegal for group health plans and health insurers to deny coverage to healthy individuals or charge them higher premiums based solely on a genetic predisposition to a specific disease.