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May 6, 2002

The Honorable Tom Daschle  
United States Senate  
509 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Daschle:

The Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) supports quick passage of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) that was reported out of the Senate Finance Committee on a strongly bipartisan basis.

Approving the current version of TPA, which the House passed, would promote global enactment of strong intellectual property standards comparable to those found in the United States. BIO urges you to oppose any amendment designed to weaken intellectual property protections abroad. While these amendments may come under the pretext of providing access to medications in developing countries, in reality these amendments could open the door to seizing the intellectual property of biopharmaceutical companies. Such a precedent would seriously weaken incentives for companies to develop the drugs and biologics for the treatment of diseases here and abroad.

Rapid passage of a clean TPA would also provide needed security for American farmers, ranchers, and the employees of food and agriculture companies, which are particularly dependent on exports for their economic viability. However, unless Congress gives the President the authority and necessary guidance to negotiate these problems on our behalf, a number of countries will undoubtedly move forward with an agenda that is not in the best interests of American biotechnology companies.

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The strong bipartisanship cooperation that has historically prevailed in the Senate on trade matters must be re-established to allow rapid passage of a clean TPA.

BIO represents more than 1,000 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations in all 50 U.S. states. BIO members are involved in the research and development of health-care, agricultural, industrial and environmental biotechnology products.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl B. Feldbaum", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carl B. Feldbaum  
President  
Biotechnology Industry Organization

CBF:LF:ae