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January 28, 2008

The Honorable Helen Sommers  
WA State House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

RE: The Strategic Importance of eScience to Washington's Future

Dear Representative Sommers,

When Lee Hartwell gave a talk at the University of Washington, a few weeks after winning the 2001 Nobel Prize, he made an interesting observation. He noted that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will be dramatically shaped by the convergence of biology and information science, that cities and countries around the world want to be the leader in this, and that our community is one of the handful that actually have a realistic prospect of being such a leader.

The opportunity is bigger and more vivid today than it was then. Washington has become the world leader in global health. The newly established Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation has the potential to improve dramatically our understanding of what programs deliver better health most efficiently. Also, progress toward a future of much more precise medicine, based on the discoveries of genome sciences and other fields, is leading us rapidly toward a future of predictive, preventive, highly personalized medicine.

All this involves managing and analyzing data of enormous size and complexity, requiring greater computing capability and sophistication than ever before. The University of Washington's eScience Institute Initiative is vitally important. It will be a key element in enabling the University to continue as a leader in exactly the technologies that are indispensable to leadership in the life sciences as well as other disciplines.

The Washington Biotechnology & Biomedical Association strongly supports the 2008 budget request for \$2 million for the University of Washington's eScience Institute Initiative. We are confident that this is the kind of strategic investment that will generate multiple returns: in additional grants, in scientific breakthroughs, in new enterprises and new career opportunities, and in better health for people everywhere.

Sincerely,

Jack Faris, PhD  
President