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## Genetic Engineering: Prescription for Perfection or Roadmap for Disaster?

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## GENTIC ENGINEERING: PRESCRIPTION FOR PERFECTION OR ROADMAP FOR DISASTER?

### Introductions

*Mr. Kutulakis:* Good morning. My name is Peter Kutulakis. I am associate dean here at the law school and a member of the faculty. It's my happy responsibility to welcome you here today on behalf of Dean John Maher, who cannot be with us because of a prior commitment, he will be here later in the afternoon, and also on behalf of the staff and faculty of The Dickinson School of Law. We're very happy to have you here today.

The Dickinson School of Law is the oldest law school in Pennsylvania and the oldest independent law school in the nation. In addition to our rich heritage, we pride ourselves on having been and continuing to be on the cutting edge of legal education and the legal profession and in relating the law to other important issues of the day, which brings us to this pioneering program on genetic engineering. We wish to extend our deepest gratitude to our co-sponsors, the Pennsylvania Medical Society and the Dickinson Journal of Environmental Law & Policy.

In addition to members of those organizations, the coordinating committee for this program included Dean Maher, Dr. Mary K. Howett, a member of the faculty of the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine, and Mr. Bruce Cooper, who is Chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Interdisciplinary Committee on Medical and Health-Related Issues.

Now, at this time I'd like to call on Mr. Cooper.

*Mr. Cooper:* Thank you. I'll be brief, because we have important things to discuss today. About three years ago, the Pennsylvania Bar Association Interdisciplinary Committee on Health Related Affairs started to review the field of genetic engineering and felt that developments were going to come fast in this field, we started to research and consult with others about recent developments and discoveries. Confidence in the future of this field was justified because today you can't open a newspaper without seeing some new scientific development. We think the field is important, not just to professionals, both medical and legal, but to community leaders, legislators, and to people who have families and responsibilities. The questions raised by these discoveries in genetic engineering are not only legal issues, they're not only scientific issues, but, more importantly, they are ethical issues. They involve the very future of our society.

The most difficult thing in the world to do is to understand the underlying science. Fortunately, we have Dr. Howett and a great panel who will boil this down to what we call a primer. There is no point in discussing law and ethics unless you, the members who are seated here today, have some clear understanding of what is the underlying science. You will be given a glossary of terms, which I hope will be helpful.

I'd like to set an informal tone for this entire session. We want you to feel comfortable asking questions. No one is being graded, of course, although the lawyers get credit for six hours of time that we spend. I'm sure you'll be encouraged even to interrupt the speakers

if you have something you want to ask. They can get right back on the track.

It's a privilege to be here, to work with The Dickinson School of Law and with the Pennsylvania Medical Society, both of whom have shown the foresight to bring this type of program to central Pennsylvania.

*Mr. Kutulakis:* Thank you, Mr. Cooper. I'd now like to call on Susan Weber, who is Assistant General Counsel of the Pennsylvania Medical Society and a member of The Dickinson School of Law's class of 1989.

*Ms. Weber:* Good morning. Bruce essentially gave my welcome. I wanted to, on behalf of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, welcome you to this very important symposium. Not a day goes by that I don't read a medical news clipping related to the Human Genome Project.

Presently, there is an article about a now 30-year-old woman from Ontario who has a familial disorder that causes her cholesterol level to be dangerously high. About a year ago, I believe, genetic researchers removed a portion of her liver, treated some of her genes or inserted new genes, and reinserted the treated portion of her liver. Today her cholesterol level has dropped dramatically. This woman had a heart attack as a result of this at the age of sixteen. Because of new genetic discoveries, she now has, fortunately, a much better outlook.

The other side of the genetics explosion is a rather dark side, and part of that is related to subjects such as employment discrimination and potential discrimination in purchasing of health and life insurance. These are some of the issues that we're here to look at for the next day and a half. On behalf of the Pennsylvania Medical Society, I'm delighted to welcome you to Dickinson.

*Mr. Kutulakis:* Thank you, Susan. It's now my pleasure to call on David Raphael, class of '94 who is editor-in-chief of The Dickinson School of Law Journal of Environmental Law & Policy.

*Mr. Raphael:* Good morning and welcome to Dickinson, and to our alumni, welcome back. It's my privilege as editor-in-chief of the Dickinson Journal of Environmental Law & Policy to welcome you here today.

I think we have a nice blend today of ethics, of science and of law, and I hope you enjoy yourselves and, again, welcome to Dickinson.