At the January 19 meeting of the National Advisory Eye Council, the NEI conducted a review of its Ocular Genetics Program Portfolio. Among the speakers was Dr. Alan Guttmacher, Deputy Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI), who spoke about state-of-the-art in human genetics. In echoing NIH Director Dr. Zerhouni’s comments heralding the NEI-sponsored discovery of an AMD gene, Dr. Guttmacher stated:

“The International HapMap Project has provided an important new genomics-based tool that will make it much easier to find genes involved in the causation and progression of common diseases. The NEI and its research community have truly led the way in showing this is the case. Last Spring’s identification by NEI-funded researchers of Complement Factor H as an important gene in the causation of AMD was the first such use of the HapMap, which was not even completed until a half a year later.”

Dr. Guttmacher’s comments also echoed a November 7 Newsweek article entitled *The Future Arrives Early*, which also cited the AMD gene discovery.