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Attn: Search Committee

This letter is in reference to Dr. Yingbin Fu, a postdoctoral fellow in the laboratory of Professor King-Wai Yau, who is applying for a faculty position in your department. I have known Yingbin since his arrival at Johns Hopkins 7 years ago, and am pleased to write on his behalf.

As you will see from his CV, papers, and research summary, Yingbin has focused on molecular genetic approaches to vertebrate photoreceptor function, and in particular the properties of the visual pigments and phototransduction proteins. His recent experiments on the chromophore requirements of intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells (i.e. the cells that use melanopsin) are extremely well done and fill a major gap in this field. I served as the editor of this paper, which recently appeared in PNAS, and I am honored to have been associated in this tiny way with it. Yingbin has also been involved in transgenic experiments in which cone or rod pigments are expressed in rods and cones, respectively. My impression is that Yingbin has been the main mover on the molecular biology side, and that others in the Yau lab have done the electrophysiology. In all of this work my impression is that Yingbin has been working quite independently. King Yau is a superb electrophysiologist, but he has no formal training in molecular biology so he gives those doing molecular biology in his lab essentially free reign to design and trouble-shoot experiments.

In sum, Yingbin is an accomplished molecular biologist with a strong track record in retina research. He is coming from an outstanding lab that has set high standards for rigorous research. Yingbin is smart and hardworking, and he also strikes me as sincere and highly motivated to make a substantial contribution to vision research. I hope that you will invite him to give a talk, and take the opportunity to judge him at first hand.

Yours sincerely,



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