Author's response to reviews

Title: Genes encoding critical transcriptional activators for murine neural tube development and human spina bifida: a case-control study

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Author's response to reviews:

Dear Editor,

We are respectively submitting a revision of our manuscript, "Genes encoding critical transcriptional activators for murine neural tube development and human spina bifida: a case-control study". We have made revisions according to the reviewers comments. We have also constructed the abstract based on instruction from you, added the author's contribution at the end of the manuscript.

Responses to reviewer's concerns:

Reviewer 1.
1. We have added the discussion regarding folic acid supplementation and potential gene-environment interaction, especially with the ALX1 gene since the mouse knockout model responses to maternal folate supplementation.

2. TFAP2A haplotype: Dr. Blom made a great point, we have added the future sequencing effort in the discussion based on his suggestion.

3. We have added discussion on future effort on searching for rare causal mutations using next-gen sequencing technologies.

Reviewer 2.
1. Table 2. We have added explanation for MAF and HWE at the bottom of the table.

2. Table 3. p=0.08, it is actually 0.008 in the file so it meets the criteria of p<0.05.
Also i would like to inform you that i recently moved to Dell Pediatric Research Institute at UT Austin. Therefore my contact information has changed.

Thank you, and look forward to hearing from you regarding our manuscript.

Sincerely,

Huiping Zhu, MD., PH.D.
Dell Pediatric Research Institute
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