

Congressional Alert

Urge Congress to Reject Embryo-Killing Research

WASHINGTON (June 1, 2006)—The U.S. Senate will soon take up legislation to authorize federal funding of the type of stem cell research that requires killing human embryos—legislation that would overturn President Bush’s ban on such funding.

The bill (H.R. 810), which is strongly opposed by National Right to Life, already passed the House of Representatives a year ago.

Your help is needed! Please communicate with your two U.S. senators, urging them to support President Bush’s pro-life policy and to oppose H.R. 810.

The Senate might also take up one or more additional bills dealing with other ethical issues relating to medical research. Please check the Legislative Action Center on the NRLC website for the latest updates.

You can send messages to your senators by e-mail, telephone, fax, or U.S. mail. Details appear below.

Background

President Bill Clinton, near the end of his administration, took steps to authorize federal funding of research using stem cells obtained by killing human embryos—embryos originally created by in vitro fertilization in infertility clinics. However, after President Bush took office in January 2001, he blocked such funding. President Bush’s policy, announced in August 2001, allowed federal funds to be used only for research on “cell lines” derived from human embryos before the adoption of the policy.

H.R. 810 would overturn President Bush’s pro-life policy. This bill would authorize federally funded research using stem cells from human embryos who are donated by their biological parents; the process of removing the stem cells will kill the embryos. The House passed the bill on May 24, 2005, by a vote of 238-194.

A companion bill, S. 471, sponsored by Senators Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) and Tom Harkin (D-Ia.), currently has 42 cosponsors. To see an always-current list of the cosponsors of S. 471, go to <http://www.capwiz.com/nrlc/issues/> and click on “S. 471.”

Take Action Now!

Please urge all senators to oppose federal funding of research that requires killing human embryos, and in particular, to oppose H.R. 810.

Urge other pro-life citizens to do the same. Utilize newsletters, church bulletins, call-in radio shows, and other means to alert pro-life citizens to this crucial fight. Also, write letters or op-ed essays for local newspapers, highlighting the critical votes that federal lawmakers will soon cast.

Key Points in Support of the Pro-Life Policy

* Each human being begins as a human embryo. Tell your senators that you agree with President Bush that the government should not fund research that requires the killing of human embryos.

* Stem cells can be obtained without killing human embryos, from umbilical cord blood and from various types of adult tissue. Already, humans with over 60 different disease conditions have received therapeutic benefit from treatment with such “adult stem cells.” In contrast, embryonic stem cells have not been tested in humans at all because of the dangers, including frequent formation of tumors.

Encourage your senators to support funding of research on stem cells taken from adults and other sources that do not involve harm to human embryos or other humans.

* Those who favor federal funding of research that kills human embryos sometimes claim that these embryos “will be discarded anyway,” but this need not be so. Many human embryos have been adopted while still embryos, or simply donated by their biological parents to other infertile couples, and are happy children today. Tell your senators that you favor “human embryo adoption, not dissection.”

For additional information on ethical and unethical forms of stem cell research, see the material available at www.stemcellresearch.org and the NRLC Human Embryos webpage at http://www.nrlc.org/killing_embryos/index.html.

Different Ways to Communicate with Members of Congress

To communicate quickly and effectively with your senators’ offices, use the NRLC Legislative Action Center at <http://www.capwiz.com/nrlc/home/>.

This resource will help you easily send messages to your two U.S. senators in opposition to federal funding of embryo-killing research.

Once you are at the Legislative Action Center, click on the latest Action Alert that deals with this issue. You will be shown suggested e-mail messages (which are easy to modify) to send to lawmakers, with different messages for sponsors and nonsponsors of the bad bills.

Telephone

You can communicate with your senators by calling their Washington, D.C., offices through the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121. If you are unsure of who represents you, just give the operator the name of your state, and you will be connected to the correct offices.

It is very helpful to also call the local in-state offices of your senators. Those numbers are available on the NRLC website’s Legislative Action Center under “Elected Officials,” at <http://www.capwiz.com/nrlc/dbq/officials/>.

Faxed Letters

If you prefer to fax a letter, you can use the tab “Elected Officials” (<http://www.capwiz.com/nrlc/dbq/officials/>) to find the fax numbers of your senators (for any who chooses to publish a fax number). You can also obtain such fax numbers by telephoning your senators’ offices (see above), or by referring to congressional websites such as www.senate.gov.

U.S. Mail

You can communicate with your senators by U.S. mail at the following addresses (however, delivery of U.S. mail to congressional offices is often delayed for a long time by security-related processing):

Senator _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Please Help NRLC Oppose This Legislation

If you obtain a response from a senator, or any other information on any lawmaker’s position on this issue (including information reported in the press), please forward it to NRLC by e-mail to Legfederal@aol.com (preferred), or by fax to (202) 347-3668, or by U.S. mail to NRLC, Federal Legislation Department, 512-10th Street Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20004-1401.