



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 10, 2007
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

S. 5 – Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007

(Sen. Reid (D) NV and 39 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes Senate passage of S. 5, which would use Federal taxpayer dollars to support and encourage the destruction of human life for research. The bill would compel all American taxpayers to pay for research that relies on the intentional destruction of human embryos for the derivation of stem cells, overturning the President's policy that funds research without promoting such ongoing destruction. If S. 5 were presented to the President, he would veto the bill.

The President strongly supports medical research and has worked with Congress to increase resources for the National Institutes of Health. This Administration is the first to provide Federal funds for human embryonic stem cell research and has done so without encouraging the destruction of human embryos. The President's policy permits the Federal funding of research using embryonic cell lines created prior to August 9, 2001, the date his policy was announced, along with stem cell research using other kinds of cell lines. Scientists can therefore explore the potential applications of such cells, but the Federal government does not offer incentives or encouragement for the destruction of human life.

Over the past six years, more than \$130 million in taxpayer dollars has been devoted to human embryonic stem cell research consistent with the President's policy. Overall, more than \$3 billion has gone to innovative research on all forms of stem cells, contributing to proven medical treatments that use human stem cells from adult and other non-embryonic sources. S. 5 seeks to replace the Administration's policy by providing Federal funding for the first time for a line of research that involves the intentional destruction of living human embryos for the derivation of their cells. Destroying nascent human life for research raises serious ethical problems, and millions of Americans consider the practice immoral. The Administration believes that government has a duty to use the people's money responsibly, both supporting important public purposes and respecting moral boundaries.

Alternative types of human stem cells – drawn from adults, children, umbilical-cord blood, and other non-embryonic sources, without doing harm to the donors – have already achieved therapeutic results in thousands of patients with many different diseases. Moreover, a recent series of encouraging research reports offer hope that stem cells drawn from non-embryonic sources may possess characteristics like those of embryonic stem cells. In addition, researchers are now working to develop promising new techniques to produce stem cells similar in nature to those derived from human embryos, but without harming or destroying embryos.

S. 5 clearly acknowledges the potential of these new advances and the importance of supporting

them. The provisions in the bill to promote research leading to new techniques for deriving the functional equivalent of embryonic stem cells, without harming or destroying human embryos, encourage science that is not in conflict with ethics.

Unfortunately, the bill then crosses that same ethical line, by proposing to use taxpayer dollars to encourage destruction of nascent human life for research. The Administration believes that research on alternative sources of stem cells is extremely promising and provides robust opportunities to advance science without compelling American taxpayers to participate in ongoing destruction of human embryos.

Moreover, private sector support and public funding by several States for this line of research, which will add up to several billion dollars in the coming few years, argue against the notion of any urgent shortfall of research funding. Whatever one's view of the ethical issues or the state of the research, the future of this field does not require a policy of Federal subsidies that is offensive to the moral principles of millions of Americans.

The President believes that by enacting appropriate policy safeguards while encouraging the development of novel scientific techniques, it is possible to advance scientific and medical frontiers without violating moral principles. S. 5 fails to find that balance and is therefore deeply troubling to millions of Americans. The President urges Congress to pass an alternative bill that would advance stem cell research without encouraging destruction of human life.

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