



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 11, 2007

CONTACT: DARIN THACKER

(202) 225-3076

Herger Opposes Taxpayer Funding of Controversial Stem Cell Research

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congressman Wally Herger today voted against H.R. 3, legislation that would require taxpayers to help fund controversial embryonic stem cell research. Herger supports promising stem cell research that does not involve the destruction of human embryos. For instance, a major study published earlier this week found that stem cells from amniotic fluid have similar medical potential as those derived from embryos. Herger made the following remarks regarding his opposition to the measure:

"Like all Americans, I strongly support efforts to find cures for debilitating and tragic diseases, such as diabetes, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease and paralysis," Herger stated. "Many scientists believe stem cell research could result in breakthrough medical discoveries, and a broad range of research is already underway in our nation. Private groups and non-federal sources currently fund embryonic stem cell research. Today's debate before the House, however, was whether federal taxpayer money should help fund embryonic stem cell research, which many Americans morally oppose. I believe taxpayers should not be forced to subsidize such research, and therefore I oppose this legislation.

"Importantly, in contrast to unproven embryonic stem cell research that has never treated a single patient, stem cells harvested from adult bone marrow and umbilical cord blood have already been used to treat dozens of diseases in thousands of patients," continued Herger. "Meanwhile, a landmark new study suggests that stem cells derived from amniotic fluid have great potential to produce real breakthrough cures. Such stem cells have many of the same features as embryonic stem cells, but do not involve the destruction of human embryos. In short, these alternative sources of stem cells do not raise any troubling ethical questions, and have proven to be more likely to produce breakthrough cures."

Herger concluded, "Rather than passing a bill that will surely result in a presidential veto, I believe Congress should consider alternative legislation that would facilitate noncontroversial stem cell research and merit the strong support of virtually all Americans."

For more information, please visit <http://www.house.gov/herger> on the Internet!