



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

July 17, 2006
(Senate)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

S. 2754 – Alternative Pluripotent Stem Cell Therapies Enhancement Act

(Sens. Santorum (R) PA, Specter (R) PA, and Inhofe (R) OK)

The Administration strongly supports Senate passage of S. 2754, a bill to aid research into techniques of deriving pluripotent stem cells without harming or destroying human embryos.

Pluripotent stem cells are cells that can be differentiated into nearly all the cell types in the human body. Research is ongoing into whether stem cells derived from adults or from umbilical cord blood and other non-embryonic sources may be pluripotent. At present scientists are able to derive pluripotent stem cells from living human embryos. As now practiced, however, that derivation involves the destruction of these embryos, and therefore raises serious moral concerns. The bill authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to support the use and further development of techniques for producing pluripotent cells like those derived from embryos, but without harming or destroying human embryos.

Several such techniques are now being explored by researchers, and significant advances have been announced in the past year. Should these efforts succeed, it would be possible for scientists to investigate the potential of cells like those derived from embryos without using techniques that raise moral concerns by destroying human embryos.

Research using pluripotent stem cells (whether from embryos or other sources) is at a very early stage of development, and it will be many years before researchers can know if it could have therapeutic applications. Precisely at this early stage it would be most valuable to develop ethically responsible techniques for such research, so that the potential of pluripotent stem cells can be explored without violating human dignity or human life.

The Administration supports efforts to seek such a way forward out of a firm conviction articulated by the President that science and ethics need not and should not be at odds. With the right combination of public policies and scientific techniques, biomedical research can advance without violating ethical bounds. The Administration believes the skill and ingenuity of American science should be brought to bear on the challenge of finding such morally uncontroversial ways forward, and the Federal government can play a role in encouraging and supporting American scientists in that effort. This bill is an important step in that direction.

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