

BUSH SACRIFICES STEM CELL RESEARCH TO RADICAL RIGHT WING POLITICS

On August 9, 2001, Bush announced a new Federal policy that severely limited stem cell research in the United States. Now, a bipartisan group in Congress is working to eliminate the stifling restrictions the Administration put into place. However, Bush has steadfastly refused to reconsider the issue, despite the fact that his own NIH Director admits that the President's ideology is hindering scientific progress. Bush, who has yet to veto a single piece of legislation since he became President, is now threatening to veto a bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. As preparations are underway for the 2006 Congressional races, it is clear that President Bush is trying to mollify right wing conservatives.

RIGHT WING CONSERVATIVES MAKE STEM CELL BAN A PRIORITY

American Life League Ad Threatens Bush on Reelection. The American Life League ran a print ad in the Washington Times comparing George W. Bush's 2000 campaign promise to oppose stem cell research with George H.W. Bush's 1988 campaign promise to not increase taxes. "The Bush Family Secret For One Term Presidencies," reads the ad. If Bush breaks his promise he "won't reactivate his political base sufficiently to re-elect him in 2004." [American Life League Press Release, 7/27/01]

Bauer Said that Bush Defiance of Conservatives on Stem Cell Would "Up the Ante" on Supreme Court Nominees. Gary Bauer, a social conservative and Republican presidential candidate, said that the possibility of Bush supporting stem cell research would have an effect on conservative support of Bush Supreme Court nominees. "It would raise serious questions about the sincerity of his [Bush's] professed pro-life views. ... It would up the ante on things like Supreme Court nominations," Bauer said. "There would be much less willingness to trust the White House." [San Francisco Chronicle, 7/22/01(emphasis added)]

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Said Stem Cell "Leads Us Into A Culture of Death." United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote a letter to Bush opposing stem cell research. "You can make a difficult but correct decision now -- or set the stage for all-but-impossible decisions in the future for yourself and your successors, as a research enterprise impatient with moral limits increasingly leads us into a culture of death," the letter read. [New York Times, 7/11/01]

The Right Wing Calls Out the Big Guns: House Speaker Delay is Coordinating Members on HR 810 Since GOP Leadership Decided Not To. According to The Hill, "The GOP leadership has chosen not to whip the bill, allowing members instead to vote their consciences, but a senior GOP aide said DeLay will be coordinating with members opposed to the legislation. [The Hill, 5/24/05]

BUSH STEM CELL POLICY HINDERS THE SEARCH FOR MEDICAL CURES

Bush's August 2001 Stem Cell Decision Greatly Limited Stem Cells Lines Available for Federal Research. On August 9, 2001, Bush rolled back Clinton-era guidelines to limit federal research to stem cell lines that had already been produced prior to his announcement. The lines, produced from excess embryos created for the purpose of fertility treatment. Initially announced as 64 viable lines, NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni informed the House in May 2004 that just 19 lines are currently available for federal research. [NIH Fact Sheet, 01/01; www.nih.gov; Bush Remarks on Federal Funding for Stem Cell Research, 8/9/01; USA Today, 8/13/01; L.A. Times, 6/8/04]

- **Bush Approved Stem Cell Lines Unusable in Humans.** The 19 viable stem cell lines that Bush approved for federal research were all grown on a “feeder layer” of mouse cells. Any attempt to transplant the cells into humans for treatment would create a danger of passing mouse-borne viruses into the recipient. [[Boston Globe](#), 5/23/04; [Rocky Mountain News](#), 4/27/04]

America Losing Its Technological Advantage In Stem Cell Research. In the three years since Bush announced his stem cell policy, the majority of new stem cell lines have been created overseas – at least 51 to date. “Science is like a stream of water, because it finds its way,” said Susan Fisher, a professor at the University of California at San Francisco. “And now it has found its way outside the United States.” Also shifting overseas has been research on techniques to use stem cells in medical therapies, risking that the US will be left behind in the application to disease treatment. [[Boston Globe](#), 5/23/04; [New York Times](#), 5/6/04]

Diverse Set of Stem Cell Lines Key to Developing Cures to Diseases. Research into the potential for stem cells to cure of conditions that affect 100 million Americans including Parkinson’s, type-1 diabetes, spinal cord injuries and even Alzheimer’s will require a broad diversity of cell lines to ensure that discoveries are universal and not limited to a specific cell line. [[Boston Globe](#), 6/2/04; [Washington Post](#), 6/10/04; [Associated Press](#), 7/19/01]

NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni Admits More Cell Lines Will Speed Research; Says Ideology is Hindering Advances. Zerhouni sent a four-page letter to Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Michael N. Castle (R-DE) stating that more embryonic cells line would aid in the advancement of research, saying “...it is fair to say that from a purely scientific perspective more cell lines may well speed some areas of human embryonic stem cell research...” Zerhouni noted the inconsistencies in the right-wing position during his testimony in front of Congress. He was asked by Sen. Specter "If they're going to be destroyed [anyway], where is the moral issue?" To which Zerhouni replied: "I think you'll have to ask that from those who hold that view." [[Washington Post](#), 5/16/04; [Washington Post](#), 4/7/05]

BUSH IS TRYING TO PLACATE ANTI-ABORTION ACTIVISTS...

Bush Threatens to Veto Bipartisan Stem Cell Legislation To Avoid Angering Anti-Abortion Activists. On Friday, President Bush reiterated his policy: “I made my position very clear on embryonic stem cells...the use of federal money, taxpayers' money to promote science which destroys life in order to save life is – I'm against that. And therefore, if the bill (HR 810) does that, I will veto it.” Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute has stated “Bush would prefer not to have this issue highlighted” as it would antagonize evangelicals in his conservative voter base. Opponents of research including the American Life League have told the president they will hold him to his promise to block any expansion in the number of available lines. [[Remarks by President Bush](#), 5/20/05; [L.A. Times](#), 5/9/04; [Daily News](#), 6/8/04; [New York Times](#), 5/6/04]

- **Rep. Castle clarifies: Rep Castle’s (R- DE) and Rep. DeGette’s (D-CO) legislation does not “allow for the creation of embryos for research nor does it fund the destruction of embryos.”** In response to the president's veto threat, Rep. Castle issued a statement saying the bill doesn't stray from Bush's principles. Castle said that his legislation is aimed only at allowing use of frozen embryos that prospective parents didn't need not encouraging creation of new ones. "Under no circumstances does this legislation allow for the creation of embryos for research nor does it fund the destruction of embryos," Mr. Castle said. His bill "draws a strict ethical line by only allowing federally funded research on stem-cell lines that were derived ethically from donated embryos determined to be in excess. ... This is consistent with current federal policy set by President Bush on August 9, 2001." [[Wall Street Journal](#), 5/23/05]

...SO HE IGNORES BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR STEM CELL RESEARCH

Bipartisan Coalition in Congress Supports Expanding Federal Stem Cell Research. In early June 2004, 58 senators including 14 Republicans wrote the White House requesting that the number of stem cell lines available be expanded. In April 2004, 206 House members including Rep. Bill Thomas (R-CA), Rep. Deborah Pryce (R-OH), Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA) and nearly three dozen Republicans in all, wrote Bush with the same request. [[Philadelphia Inquirer](#), 6/8/04; [New York Times](#), 5/6/04]

The Bill President Bush Says He Would Veto Has 23 Republican Co-sponsors. As Congress plans to begin debate on HR 810, the bill has 200 co-sponsors including 23 Republican Congressman. The Republican Co-Sponsors of HR 810 are: Rep. Bass (R-NH), Rep. Biggert (R-IL.), Rep. Boehlert (R-NY), Rep. Bono (R-CA), Rep. Bradley (R-NH), Rep. Brown-Waite (R-FL), Rep. Foley (R-FL), Rep. Gibbons (R-NV), Rep. Gilchrest (R-MD), Rep. Granger (R-TX), Rep. Johnson (R-CT), Rep. Porter (R-NV), Rep. Ramstad (R-MN), Rep. Davis (R-VA), Rep. Dent (R-PA), Rep. Kelly (R-NY), Rep. Kirk (R-IL), Rep. Kolbe (R-AZ), Rep. Larsen (D-WA), Rep. Leach (R-IA), Rep. Schwarz (R-MI), Rep. Shaw (R-FL), Rep. Shays (R-CT), and Rep. Simmons (R-CT). [HR 810, 5/23/05]

Nancy Reagan Has Called for Expanding Stem Cell Lines, Saying We Can't Lose Any More Time. In May 2004, Nancy Reagan told a fundraiser for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation that stem cell research must be pursued "to save families from the pain" of debilitating illnesses. "I don't see how we can turn our backs on this," she said. "We have lost so much time. I just can't bear to lose any more." [[LA Times](#), 5/9/04]

Several Anti-Abortion Politicians Calling for Expanding Stem Cell Lines Available for Research. Among the opponents of abortion supporting expanding stem cell research are Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN), former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R-CA), Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR), Sen. Robert Bennett (R-UT), and Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID). [[USA Today](#), 6/9/04; [Orlando Sentinel](#), 6/9/04; [Philadelphia Inquirer](#), 6/8/04; [L.A. Times](#), 6/8/04; [Slate](#), 8/3/01]

Conservative Congressional Republicans Support Embryonic Stem Cell Research.

- **Rep. Schwarz (R-MI):** Rep. Joe Schwarz, a pro-life, Catholic from a staunchly Republican district has come out in support of embryonic stem cell research: "I look at this as a strongly pro-life effort -- and I am a Catholic -- to be able to discover a cure for Alzheimer's disease, or Parkinson's, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or any of the other dreadful neurological disorders that afflict us, both genetic and those that are acquired in a lifetime... I think this is the most pro-life thing you could do." [Press Conference on the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005, 5/11/05; [The Hill](#), 5/19/05]
- **Sen. Hatch (R-UT):** Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), a bishop in the Mormon Church, supports embryonic stem cell research despite his pro-life stance as well: "I do not believe that life begins in a Petri dish and, like many others, hope that these excess embryos can benefit mankind. ... For me, being pro-life means helping the living." [[Los Angeles Times](#), 5/20/05]
- **Former Sen. Danforth (R-MO):** Former Sen. John Danforth (R-MO), an ordained Episcopal minister and abortion opponent, wrote in the [New York Times](#) that the Republican Party "has gone so far in adopting a sectarian agenda that it has become the political extension of a religious movement." He then criticized efforts to criminalize embryonic stem cell research, saying that it seeks to "punish people who believe it is their religious duty to use science to heal the sick." [[New York Times](#), 3/30/05]

Republican Poll of 13 GOP Districts shows 66% Support Embryonic Stem Cell Research.

A poll was conducted by the Winston Group and partly financed by the Republican Main Street Partnership, a group of moderates of which Rep. Castle is President. According to the New York Times, “The survey questioned voters in 13 Republican districts and found that 66 percent supported embryonic stem cell research, while 27 percent were opposed.” [New York Times, 5/18/05]

DESPITE THE FACT THAT HIS POLICY HINDERS MEDICAL RESEARCH

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