



Dedicated to Advancing Stem Cell Research

Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research

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February 27, 2007

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr
Senate President
Maryland Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

The Honorable Michael Erin Busch
Speaker of House of Delegates
Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

Dear Senator Miller and Delegate Busch:

I am writing on behalf of Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research (CAMR) regarding legislation currently before the Maryland General Assembly. Our coalition and its 100 members oppose the Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2007 (SB 362). CAMR represents the voices of patients, scientists, physicians and academic institutions across the country in the debate over stem cell research and the future of regenerative medicine. We have grassroots members from patient and other advocacy organizations in every state in the nation, including Maryland.

We join with patient groups, leading scientists, the National Academy of Sciences, and a large majority of the American people in opposing human reproductive cloning and implantation. The Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2007 (SB 362), however, goes far beyond banning reproductive cloning by prohibiting somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) research and reversing recent progress in Maryland in the field of embryonic stem cell research. SCNT is an important procedure that is fundamentally different than reproductive cloning and aims to save and improve lives. For this reason, CAMR works on state, federal, and international levels to support efforts that fund and promote SCNT research.

SCNT could lead to dramatic new treatments and cures for now incurable diseases and medical conditions. SCNT could be used to help nearly 100 million Americans suffering from cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, Parkinson's, spinal cord injuries, heart disease, ALS, and other devastating conditions for which treatments and cures must still be found. The current definition of "human cloning" in SB 362 is broadly written and includes SCNT procedures. The strongest and most effective ban on human reproductive cloning is one which aims to prevent implantation and human asexual reproduction that results from implantation. Any attempt to intervene with prohibitions prior to implantation effectively ends stem cell research that could save lives.

CAMR is also opposed to any attempt to criminalize legitimate, scientific research. We believe SB 362 would establish a dangerous precedent by making doctors and scientists felons subject to imprisonment and hefty fines.

We are encouraged by the recent reversal of the ban on SCNT research in Iowa and encourage the state of Maryland to move forward with its support of SCNT and other important stem cell research efforts rather than take a step back by passing prohibitive legislation such as SB 362.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sean Tipton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sean" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Tipton".

Sean Tipton
President

cc: Senator Thomas Middleton, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee