

The Association of Politically Active Christians

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POSITION STATEMENT ON EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH AND HUMAN CLONING

The New York State Senate, the New York State Assembly, and Governor Eliot Spitzer have each unveiled plans involving the funding of stem cell research by the State of New York. At this time, it appears that the Senate Plan does not contain any language either prohibiting or authorizing the use of state funds for embryonic stem cell research. However, the Assembly Plan and the Governor's Plan each would allow state funding for embryonic stem cell research and human cloning.

In response to these three plans, The Association of Politically Active Christians (APAC) offers the following facts:

- Embryonic stem cell research requires the destruction of living human embryos.
- Embryonic stem cell research on a large scale involves the production of living human embryos through a procedure called "somatic cell nuclear transfer," also known as human cloning.
- Both "therapeutic cloning" and "reproductive cloning" involve the production of living human embryos.
- Human cloning has been banned by several other states, and by other nations.
- Polls show that a substantial majority of Americans are not in favor of human cloning.
- Embryonic stem cell research has yielded no medically useful results to date; in contrast, adult stem cell research has resulted in many significant advances in medical treatment.

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While APAC enthusiastically supports adult stem cell research, which has been proven to be effective and does not involve harm to, or destruction of, innocent human life, APAC condemns human cloning for all purposes, regardless of whether it is called “somatic cell nuclear transfer,” “reproductive cloning,” or “therapeutic cloning.” APAC respectfully presents the following arguments in support of its position:

- Embryonic stem cell research is anti-life. It is unethical to destroy innocent human life in the (faint) hope that the resulting research may benefit another human life in the future.
- Embryonic stem cell research is anti-woman. If state funding is utilized for this type of research, that funding will encourage large-scale harvesting of human eggs for research purposes. This type of harvesting treats women’s bodies as objects to be exploited, and is harmful to women’s health.
- Embryonic stem cell research is useless. To date, after nearly thirty years, embryonic stem cell research has failed to result in even one effective medical treatment or advance. Furthermore, it shows no promise of being effective in the future.
- Embryonic stem cell research is not economically necessary. New York has been successful in promoting the biotechnology industry without funding research on human embryos, and other states and nations that have banned cloning and embryo research have continued to experience biotechnology growth. Thus, there is no basis for the suggestion that New York needs taxpayer-funded embryonic stem cell research to facilitate economic development.
- Embryonic stem cell research opens the door to research on embryos and fetuses at later stages of development. In fact, the Governor’s Plan does not place any time limit on the use of developing human life for research purposes. Once the state begins funding the use of developing human life for research purposes, there is no logical place to draw the line.
- Embryonic stem cell research is a misuse of taxpayer funds. Given that the State of New York is already \$48 billion in debt, it would be wasteful and imprudent for the state to invest billions of taxpayer dollars in this medically futile and morally objectionable pursuit.

Accordingly, APAC strongly opposes both the Assembly Plan and the Governor’s Plan regarding state funding of stem cell research, because both plans open the door to the use of taxpayer funds for the destruction of innocent human life. APAC respectfully urges the New York State Senate to introduce language into the Senate Plan that would

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make it impossible for any state funds whatsoever to be utilized for embryonic stem cell research. Furthermore, APAC requests that members of the New York State Legislature withdraw their support from any budget proposal that does not explicitly prohibit the use of state funding for embryonic stem cell research.

Finally, APAC wholeheartedly supports the Human Cloning Prohibition Act (Bill S-2032/A-5393). The proposed legislative findings contained in this bill aptly state that “creating new human life solely to be exploited via ‘reproductive cloning’ or destroyed via ‘therapeutic cloning’ . . . has been condemned on moral grounds by many as displaying a profound disrespect for life.” APAC respectfully urges the New York State Senate and the New York State Assembly to pass this important legislation.

Human embryos are developing human beings. As such, they should be protected under our state’s laws, not used and destroyed for state-financed research purposes based on the remote possibility of scientific or financial gain.

Respectfully submitted,

**THE ASSOCIATION OF
POLITICALLY ACTIVE CHRISTIANS**

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