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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • TWENTY FIFTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
2005-06 Issue Summary #5

July 28, 2006

“Stem Cell Research”

Background Information:

2005 AB 499 passed the State Assembly and State Senate during the 2005-06 Session, but was vetoed by the Governor. AB 499 provides that no person may knowingly do either of the following:

- Perform or attempt to perform human cloning or human parthenogenesis.
- Transfer or acquire for any purpose a human embryo produced by human cloning or human parthenogenesis or any embryo, cell, tissue, or product derived from a human embryo produced by human cloning or human parthenogenesis.

Rep. Ziegelbauer’s View:

I strongly support stem cell research when using adult or umbilical cord blood stem cells. However, research relying on the creation and destruction of human embryos, is wrong, debases our humanity, and should be of great concern to all of us.

This is a serious and complex issue. We all want to see continuing advances in medical science, but hope for cures must be tempered against the ethical reality that the end does not justify the means.

Simply put, embryonic stem cell research encourages the creation and then the destruction of human embryos, the very earliest stage of human life. In my view this is an ethical issue that transcends religious belief. Cheapening our humanity by encouraging its creation, followed by manipulation and destruction in the name of science sounds more like something out of Hitler’s Germany than something that would be promoted by a free society built upon principles of individual liberty.

There is real danger here. We must not take the easy way out on this, but instead ought to rise to the challenge. It would be seriously wrong for free people to look the other way while life even in its earliest form is created simply to be destroyed or manipulated, even in the name of medical research. And, it’s important for legislators representing their people to be outspoken on these kinds of fundamental issues.

It seems to me that those promoting embryonic stem cell research exaggerate the promise and neglect the serious ethical price that must be paid. Research using adult and umbilical cord blood stem cells holds tremendous promise. Government ought to support investment research using these stem cells, which do not require the creation and destruction of the building blocks of human life, and steer clear of support of research using embryonic stem cells.

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