



July 17, 2006

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the more than 900,000 members and activists of People For the American Way, we urge you to support the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005 (H.R. 810), which passed the House in May of 2005. In the spirit of scientific integrity, this legislation seeks to improve human life by opening up new avenues of research in the fight against some of the world's most tragic diseases and physical impairments.

H.R. 810 guards the scientific process through its carefully crafted language defining when embryos can be used in the harvesting of stem cells. Research conducted under this bill would not destroy any embryo that would otherwise grow to become a viable human being. On the contrary, H.R. 810 stipulates that only embryos that would otherwise be discarded by invitro fertilization clinics can be used. H.R. 810 would turn the normal excesses of the fertility treatment process into opportunities to save lives in the future. Stem cells may one day remedy otherwise permanent spinal cord injuries, might help burn victims recover, or lead to cures for Parkinson's Disease or Alzheimer's Disease.

However, the world may never realize any of these advances if embryonic stem cell research continues to remain largely in the private sector. Federal funding would enable scientists to examine many new lines of stem cells – increasing the potential for positive results. The existing federal research limited primarily to adult stem cells simply cannot meet such ends. As the President's Council on Bioethics, also known as the NBAC or National Bioethics Advisory Commission, asserted in 1999, current restrictions “conflict[s] with several of the ethical goals of medicine and related health disciplines, especially healing, prevention, and research.” The time is long overdue to roll back this misguided ban.

Please take this opportunity to rise above politics and stand up for science. With your support of H.R. 810, researchers would be able to take leaps toward goals that up until now have seemed unattainable.

Sincerely,

Ralph G. Neas
President

Tanya Clay House
Director, Public Policy