

The Association of Politically Active Christians

Three Admiral Street
Albany, New York 12205
www.apacny.net

2010 MEMORANDUM OF OPPOSITION PROPOSED BUDGETARY FUNDING (\$44.8 MILLION) FOR HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

Contact: Stephen P. Hayford (518-364-5324)

The pending budget proposal for the 2010-2011 fiscal year allocates \$44.8 million in taxpayer funding stem cell research. While this funding may ultimately be used for effective and ethical research on adult stem cells, the proposal contains no language preventing the Empire State Stem Cell Board from using the funding for embryonic stem cell research (“ESCR”). For the following reasons, APAC objects to this funding and demands that these expenditures be removed from the proposed budget. At the very least, APAC would request that the proposal be amended to include language preventing the funds from being used for ESCR.

- **It would be irresponsible to expend taxpayer dollars for ESCR during a time of fiscal crisis in our state government.** The Empire Center for New York State Policy’s Blueprint for a Better Budget (available at <http://www.empirecenter.org/Reports/2010/01/blueprint2010410.cfm>) recommends that taxpayer funding for ESCR be removed. APAC concurs in that recommendation. The budgetary problems facing the State of New York are well-documented and incontrovertible. The State is facing the possibility of cutting existing expenditures in a variety of areas and raising a variety of taxes and fees. Given the overall fiscal situation, the State of New York has no business expecting hardworking New Yorkers to foot the bill for ESCR.
- **ESCR is unethical and unChristian, and should be illegal.** Current methods of embryonic stem cell research require the destruction of living human embryos. There is no way to access an embryo’s stem cells for research purposes without killing the embryo. No one has the right to destroy an innocent human life in the (faint) hope that the resulting research may benefit another human life in the future. The Bible clearly states that the destruction of innocent human life is forbidden (see Exodus 20:13; Proverbs 6:16-19) and demonstrates the appropriate Christian attitude toward unborn children (Psalm 139:13-16). Thus, APAC supports a ban on ESCR. Given that ESCR is currently legal, the least that the State of New York could do would be to refrain from forcing New York taxpayers to fund this type of research. In addition, ESCR opens the door to the widespread harvesting of human eggs for research purposes—a procedure which involves potentially serious medical repercussions for women; this, too, creates ethical concerns.
- **If tax dollars are expended on stem cell research, they should be expended on ethical, effective, and life-affirming research—not on ESCR.** Research on adult stem cells has proven much more useful and effective than research on embryonic stem cells (although perhaps less lucrative for scientists). To the extent that the State of New York wishes to allocate monies toward stem cell research, those monies should be directed where they will be spent most effectively.

Human embryos 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.