

RESOURCE ROUNDUP

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The Hippocratic Resource

(A Statewide Organization of Louisiana Physicians, Dentists, Nurses, Therapists and Other Health Professionals)

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"I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked ... I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce an abortion"

Dear Colleague:

In the last *Roundup*, we identified several bills of Hippocratic interest scheduled for the 2008 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. As of the time of this writing, most have either been heard in various committees or have even gone through the entire legislative process, or it is doubtful that they will be heard at all. A "Legislative Update" is presented on p. 2; however, the most significant developments were in regard to **HB 861** (Walker Hines, D-95, New Orleans) **that promotes umbilical cord-blood banking from within the Department of Health & Hospitals (DHH)**, and **HB 370** (Cameron Henry, R-82, New Orleans) **that is aimed at banning taxpayer funding of human cloning in Louisiana**. HB 861 has gone to the Governor for signature, and HB 370 has been signed by the Speaker. The language of these (and the other) bills is available at www.legis.state.la.us [scroll down to "Bill Search," choose prefix (HB or SB) and enter bill number].

HB 370 passed with a House vote of 90-9-6, a Senate vote of 35-0-3 (with one amendment), and final House concurrence of 89-1-14. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the opposition to human cloning announced by such definitive passage of Representative Henry's bill – and the strong signal this sends to human cloning proponents nationwide – **the reality is that HB 370 probably does nothing to stop the most egregious abomination made possible by cloning techniques, i.e. the manufacture of animal-human hybrids or chimeras**. The bill *does* ban funding of the production of animal human clone embryos made by inserting animal genetic material (donor nuclei) into human recipient oocytes (*ova*); however, there is nothing in it that would directly prevent the production of human animal clone embryos made by inserting human genetic material into animal oocytes. As written, Section C of the bill excludes any ban on the transfer of human genetic material into an animal oocyte (*ovum*); thus, it only questionably impedes the manufacture of human animal hybrids. Such a human animal hybrid or "cybrid" (cytoplasmic hybrid) clone embryo could easily be artificially introduced into an animal "parent's" uterus to serve as a surrogate mother for a hybrid/chimeric offspring – and doubtless would, at some point! Furthermore, given the potential availability of huge amounts of private capital for such and similarly questionable research (e.g. the Gates Foundation), non-taxpayer funding could be used therefor, here in Louisiana. It is truly regrettable that Senator Morrish withdrew his SB 738, which, if passed, would have put a final nail into the human cloning coffin in the state. Given the British Parliament's approval of such human-animal hybridization last May 19th, and the doubtless more liberal next U.S. administration, we may have to revisit these issues – again! W. "Al" Krotoski, M.D., etc. and Francis Rinaudo, Jr., D.D.S.

Forthcoming Meetings of Interest: [Please contact W.A.K. for additional information]

Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity: "Healthcare and Common Good," Deerfield, IL, July 17-19. CME 12-36 hrs

Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, NCCB: "Life, Justice & Family," Cherry Hill, NJ, July 25-27. CME 4.5 hrs

Catholic Medical Association: "Theology of the Body: Modern Challenges ...," Baltimore, MD, Oct. 9-11. 1st Notice

Welcome to New Member:

Removed to ensure promised member privacy

Roster Change: [New Material in Italics]

Removed to ensure promised member privacy.

Legislative Update: (as of 6-17-08)

(see www.LaDocs4Life.org for texts of testimony given)

HB 99 (R. Jones) – to require health insurance coverage of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. *Withdrawn* by author.

HB 370 (C. Henry) – to prohibit use of public funds for human cloning:

House vote: 90-9-6. (Voting against: Ames, Dixon, Gallot, Hardy, Honey, Leger, Norton, Peterson, Richmond).

Senate vote: 35-0-3. Presented by Sen. Dan Morrish: Amended in Senate (followed by House concurrence: 89-1-14. Voting against: Peterson).

Signed by the House Speaker and Senate President.

HB 562 (Peterson) – to require coverage of contraceptives and contraceptive practices: *Failed to pass House Insurance Committee* (author failed to show up for three scheduled Committee meetings).

HB 359 (LaFonta) – to inform students and parents of human papillomavirus vaccine.

House vote: 70-19-16. Senate vote: 27-6-5.

Sent to the Governor. (We FAXed a cautionary opinion)

HB 861 (W. Hines) – to establish umbilical cord-blood banking program within DHH.

House vote: 101-0-4. Senate vote: 33-0-5.

Signed by Governor. (ACT 163)

SB 238 (Cassidy) – to permit expedited partner therapy for STDs by physicians, physician assistants, or advanced practice nurses. Senate vote: 34-0-5. House vote: 94-1-9. (Against: Barrow). Amended in House; *Adopted in Senate concurrence.*

SB 248 (Morrish) – to ban human cloning in Louisiana (with penalties): *Assigned to Senate Health & Welfare Committee.* (Probably dead for session).

SB 353 (Gautreaux & Broome) – to waive liability for licensed volunteer physicians gratuitously supervising ultrasound procedures at non-profit pregnancy resource centers in Louisiana.

Senate vote: 33-0-6. House vote: 93-0-11.

Amended in House;

Sent to the Governor.

SB 354 (Gautreaux) – to provide health insurance coverage for fertility treatments (excluding IVF). Senate vote: 34-0-4 (amended). *Assigned to House Insurance Committee; considered 6-10-08.* (Probably dead for session)

SB 738 (Morrish, Broome, Martiny) – to prohibit animal-human hybridization in Louisiana, with penalties.

Withdrawn by Sen. Morrish (in favor of HB 370).

From: The Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, April 22, 2008

Can't believe stem-cell editorial

I cannot believe The Advocate opinion on April 17 about embryonic stem cells noted that it is "nonsense" to consider human life the joining of a sperm and egg – even if that occurs in a Petri dish.

All basic biology and science have accepted this premise. Thus, it is "common sense" (not "extremism") as also noted in the column, that all human life deserves protections; anything to the contrary is immoral.

Lastly, no mention was made in the entire 17-paragraph Advocate opinion of adult stem

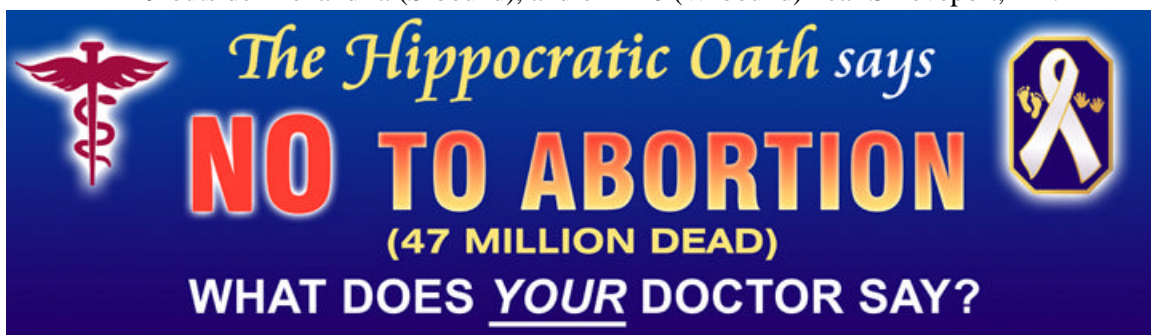
cells, which are the ONLY means proven to be successful in therapeutic studies to help with conditions like Parkinson's, diabetes, etc.

All such research with embryonic stem cells have failed and, most unfortunately, have resulted in the killing of unknown numbers of human beings

Where will the tragic effects of Roe v. Wade end?

KEITH JOHN PAUL HORCASITAS, LCSW, MHA
social worker
Baton Rouge

Thanks to the generosity of our members, we have had sufficient funds again to display the billboard illustrated below, both on I-49 outside Alexandria (S-bound), and on I-20 (W-bound) near Shreveport, LA:



ACOG, ABOG and Your Conscience

This issue is of central importance to all pro-life physicians and health care providers. The same tactics used by American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) for abortion in this instance can be used by any group that is promoting the culture of death.

In November 2007, ACOG issued Formal Opinion #385 titled "The Limits of Conscientious Refusal in Reproductive Medicine." This can be accessed through www.acog.org. [Type "ACOG Opinion 385" into Search Box at upper right]

According to its February 20 media advisory, the American Association of ProLife Obstetricians and Gynecologists (AAPLOG) reported that the Opinion's conclusions:

- Warn Ob/Gyn doctors that their practice pattern can be considered "unethical" by ACOG standards if they do not either do abortions, or refer patients desiring an abortion to an abortion provider.
- Suggests that pro-life doctors should locate their office in proximity to an abortion provider, for the convenience of such patients.

Subsequently in January 2008, the American Board of Ob/Gyn (ABOG) published revised standards for doctors seeking recertification. The revised standards are tied to ACOG Ethics compliance.

AAPLOG responded by noting that this is a raw power play to cripple, and ultimately eliminate from practice, those doctors who hold a conscience conviction on the sanctity of human life, and refuse to have a part in doing, or referring for, the elective, deliberate taking of an unborn human life.

They go on to state that "This country has, since its beginnings, honored the legitimate conscience convictions of its citizens. Pro-life doctors refuse either to electively kill the unborn, or to become an accomplice to such killing by referral to an abortionist."

The Position Statement issued by AAPLOG on Feb 6, 2008, concludes, "... it seems that the (ACOG) Ethics Committee does not understand the strength and depth of a conscience conviction against the elective, deliberate taking of an unborn human life. This is not a negotiable issue for those who hold this conviction. The United States Supreme Court allowed elective abortion to be a legal right. The U.S. Supreme Court is not an infallible moral guide for a person's conscience, as evidenced by a previous similar egregious ruling.⁷ (This references the infamous 1857 Dred Scott decision, in which the US Supreme court, by a 7-2 majority, concluded that Africans are "beings of an inferior order" than the white race, and slaves are property devoid of all rights of legal redress for grievances. The US Supreme court got it wrong in 1887, and they made the same mistake in 1973 in Roe vs. Wade: Unborn children are fully human, and are entitled to the same right to life as the rest of society.)

The complete AAPLOG Statement may be accessed at: www.aaplog.org [yellow banner on home page].

The **Catholic Medical Association** (CMA) also responded, asking ACOG to rescind Opinion #385.

In their media release (5/19/2008) they reported on requests by their organization that ACOG rescind the entire opinion.

Dr. Kathleen Raviele, President of the CMA stated, "There are significant issues that require further clarification, including the demand that physicians provide referrals for abortion." Moreover, Dr. Raviele pointed out the need for ACOG to follow due process in issuing ethics standards, as this controversial opinion was issued without input from, or a vote by, ACOG membership. Finally, Dr. Raviele stated, "CMA is still urging ACOG to rescind, and not merely revise, Opinion #385 because of its many substantial flaws and its evident lack of respect for the conscience of physicians."

Human/Animal Hybrid Cloning

Just in case you thought the Louisiana legislature is manufacturing outlandish ideas about which to legislate and that no one would ever think to make human/animal clones (see Dr. Krotoski's legislative summary, page 1. I have abstracted this report from LifeNews regarding this issue in England.

Britain OKs Hybrid Human Cloning Combining Animal and Human DNA London, England (LifeNews.com) -- Members of the British Parliament, on a lopsided vote [on May 19, 2008], approved allowing scientists to make hybrids combining animal and human DNA in human cloning attempts. The House of Commons rejected an amendment to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill that would have prevented it. MPs voted 336 to 176 against the amendment from Tory former minister Edward Leigh. He said the use of hybrid clones cross an "entirely new ethical boundary," and turn the UK into a scientific "rogue state." "In many ways we are like children playing with landmines without any concept of the dangers of the technology that we are handling," he said, according to a Press Association report. Members of parliament also voted 286 to 223 to reject a second amendment that would have prohibited so-called "true hybrids" using the sex cells of a human and an animal. Any human embryos created with human and animal DNA would be killed 14 days after their creation. Scientists say they want to engage in human cloning to obtain more embryonic stem cells for research even though they've never helped patients with diseases. <http://www.lifenews.com/bio2447.html>

Trafficking in Human Oocytes

Dr. W "Al" Krotoski has published an excellent review article about ethical and medical issues that would pertain to the procurement of human oocytes for the purposes of cloning to treat diseases in the latest issue of the *Linacre Quarterly* [75(2) (May 2008): 135-141], the Journal of the Catholic Medical Association. Subscription to *Linacre Quarterly* is available on the website of the CMA at www.cathmed.org.

Robert Chasuk, M.D.
and Patti Chasuk
Editors