

TESTIMONY ON SB 298 (Hines)

(to permit human cloning for research)

LOUISIANA HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

May 14, 2003

Madame Chairman, Honorable Committee Members:

My name is Dr. W. A. Krotoski; I am a retired internist and medical scientist, with credentials including M.D., Ph.D. and Master of Public Health degrees. I am Co-founder of *The Hippocratic Resource*, an organization of, currently, 84 life-respecting physicians, dentists, medical scientists, nurses, etc., representing over 90 advanced degrees. I am also a former President of the Louisiana Right to Life Federation, and currently its Medical Advisor. I would like to address this illustrious Committee on Senator Hines' SB 298, a bill to extend current law on banning human cloning in Louisiana.

Two years ago, the Louisiana Legislature courageously passed one of the nation's first bills to ban human cloning. This bill, also sponsored by Senator Hines, subsequently passed the House, and became law as Act 788 of the 1999 Regular Session of the Legislature.

Unfortunately, it has since become apparent that Act 788 is seriously flawed, in that it does *not* ban all human cloning, only so called *reproductive* human cloning to produce a child. Act 788 does *not* ban the production of human clone embryos for research, a procedure which has been given the euphemistic misnomer of "therapeutic" cloning. This can almost inevitably lead to what have been called human embryo "farms."

Medically and biologically speaking, a human embryo, whether produced as a clone or by normal fertilization, is human, based on his or her human origins and unique DNA - as well as by analogy with what was done to produce Dolly, the sheep clone. As such, a human clone embryo deserves the dignity of a human being, which demands protection, not killing for experimentation. Killing a human clone embryo is killing a human being, just as would be the case for any normally-created human being killed at the embryonic stage of development. Morally speaking, we are not empowered to kill each other arbitrarily, whether for research, or for any other reason. Therefore, *all* human cloning must be banned, not just that for reproduction!

The current, flawed law is scheduled to expire on July 1 of 2003, but bills were introduced in both the Senate (specifically SB 298, by Senator Hines) and the House (HB 473, by Representative Shaw) to extend it. However, a carefully crafted replacement that will have the desired effect of a comprehensive human cloning ban has also been placed before the Legislature for this session, by Representatives Beard and Shaw, as HB 1810 (which is currently scheduled to be heard by the House Criminal Justice Committee). Therefore, we ask that you defer Senate Bill 298 and House Bill 473 in order to prevent continuation of the serious flaw in current law, and to further a genuine and honest respect for human life.

Thank you very much!

W. A. Krotoski, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.

Why a Human Clone Embryo is Fully Human:

Every human being normally begins his or her unique life at the moment of fertilization, when she or he acquires the full human complement of 46 (human) chromosomes, 23 from the father, and 23 from the mother. (This fact is underlined both by *in vitro* fertilization technology and by advances in DNA identification techniques). Thereafter, the new human individual, male or female

(as determined at the moment of fertilization), goes through a spectrum of stages, part of which are scientifically designated as embryonic or embryos, the later ones as fetuses and pre-born babies or prenatals.

Similarly, a cloned individual (e.g. Dolly the sheep) goes through an embryo stage developmentally equivalent to that produced by normal fertilization. If placed into a maternal womb, this clone embryo will implant and continue to develop, just as did Dolly, and be born. Of course, if the clone embryo is of human origin, he or she – the sex is determined by the sex of the donor/adult cell nucleus which is inserted into the "de-nucleated" *ovum* ("egg") – will also pass through all the usual stages in the womb, and, if not aberrant or aborted, will be born as a human baby.