



Opposition Statement
HB96 -“Family Law – Parentage and Adoption – Definitions”

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WE RESPECTFULLY OPPOSE HB96

On behalf of our local chapters and members across the state, we respectfully oppose HB96 as written, to the extent that it may further the development, procurement, transfer and destruction of human embryos - human beings in their earliest and most vulnerable stage of life - for experimentation purposes. Human beings in embryonic form are not the biological or moral equivalent of sperm or egg. All human beings deserve respect and the protection of our laws from conception until natural death. This bill commercializes and devalues human life and parentage.

BABY HARVESTING HB96 would create a legal mechanism by which human beings in embryonic form may be mass-produced and harvested for the purpose of embryonic cell experimentation and destruction, in other words- *growing babies to kill them*. This bill would alter the current accepted medical practice of allowing the donation of either egg (ovum) or sperm, to include the commercial harvesting, procurement, transfer and trafficking of human beings in embryonic form. We object to this inhumane practice regardless of whether there is any exchange of any consideration or item of value.

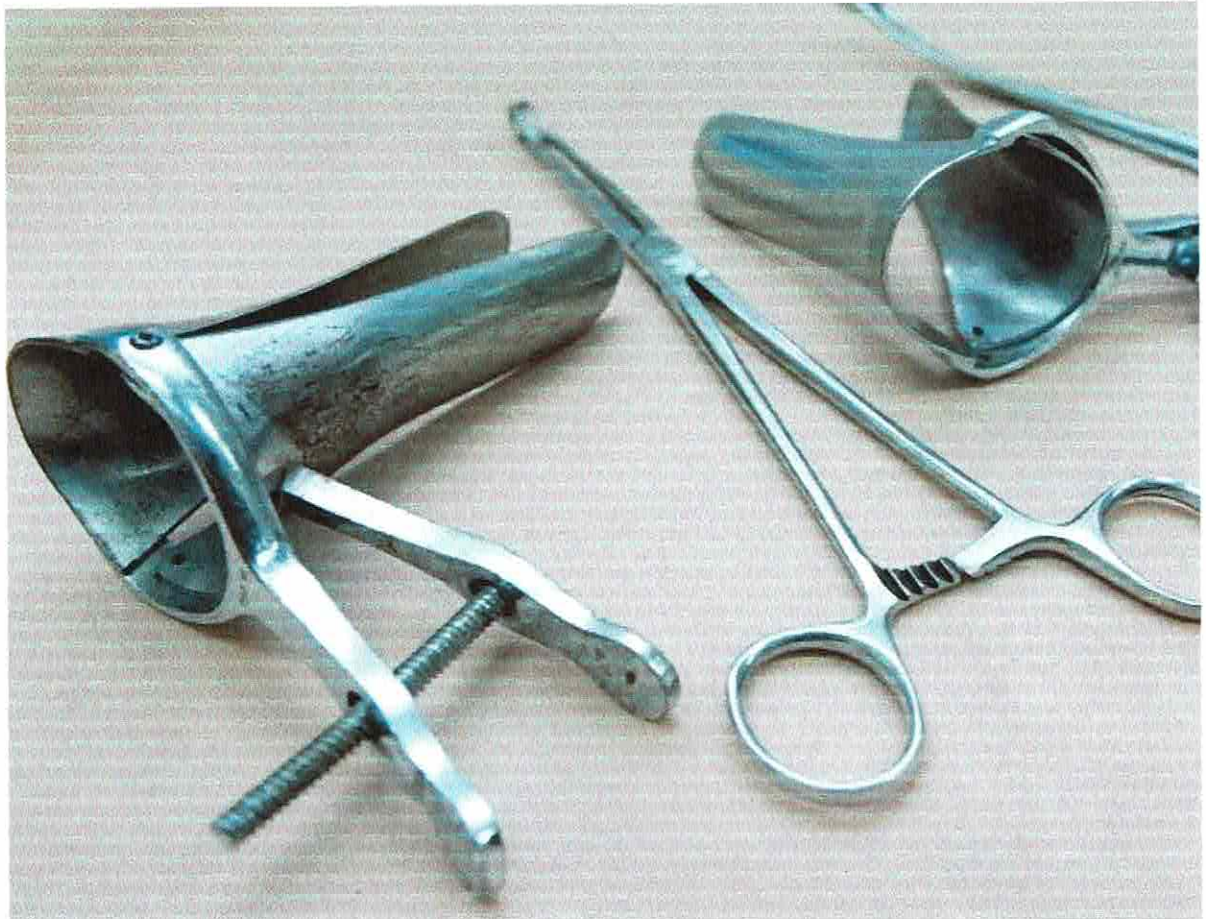
WOMEN AS BABY MILLS HB96 also redefines "mother" to exclude someone who donates a human being in embryonic form – reducing women to no more than mere petri dishes, baby mules and commercial baby mills and devaluing the role of women in procreation and parenting. This bill would allow women and babies to be treated as mere commodities under the law to be exploited and traded. The emerging practice of developing human embryos for experimentation inside a living genetic or gestational host, is a gross deviation from all ethical standards of medicine and science.

EMBRYONIC EXPERIMENTATION IS UNSUCCESSFUL Human embryonic cell research is not an effective form of research and is a bad investment for any state government. In nearly 50 years since the widespread legalization of embryonic experimentation, no diseases have been cured. Adult stem cell research has proven to be an effective and ethical means of biomedical innovation and should be the only investment of public funds.

We respectfully urge the sponsors of this bill to withdraw the bill or otherwise amend and narrow the language to specifically exclude the donation, procurement and destruction of human embryos for commercial purposes including biomedical research and experimentation.

Experimenters Pay Mexican Women to Get Pregnant and Abort | National Review

By



Tools used in abortions displayed at an office of Korea Pro-Life in Seoul, South Korea, in 2008. (Lee Jae-Won/Reuters)

Women in Mexico were paid \$1400 to be hyperstimulated so their ovaries released bountiful eggs instead of one during their cycle. They then underwent artificial insemination, resulting in early pregnancy with multiple embryos, which were then flushed out of their bodies for study. [From the NPR story:](#)

Researchers have conducted a controversial study that involved paying dozens of young women at a hospital near Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, to get artificially inseminated so their embryos could be flushed out of their bodies and analyzed for research purposes.

The study showed that embryos created that way appear to be as healthy genetically as embryos created through standard in vitro fertilization. Physically, the embryos appear to, possibly, even be healthier, the study found...

In addition, some women underwent surgical or chemical abortions afterward, when tests indicated some of the embryos might not have been successfully removed.

Some of the surviving embryos were later used to impregnate other women. Others were frozen.

This “experiment” was very wrong on at least four fronts. First, it created human life for the purpose of experimenting upon it. Second, it paid women to have abortions (when all the embryos were not flushed). Third, it treated women as objects, merely as “a Petri dish,” to quote bioethicist Lorie Zoloth (with whom I have had my differences in the past, but not here). Fourth, hyperstimulation [can have serious side effects](#), even leading to occasional death. Add in the likelihood that the women were very poor, and you have a real exploitive circumstance.

My friend, the bioethicist William Hurlbut of Stanford, calls experiments such as this “outsourcing ethics,” that is, scientists conduct immoral or questionable studies out of the country that would probably not be allowed — or dared — to be pursued in the United States.

But it all passed ethical muster, don’t you know!

Munne defends the research, noting that it was reviewed extensively and approved by the Ministry of Health of the State of Nayarit, in Mexico, and the Western Institutional Review Board in the United States. The women were fully informed of any potential risks, Munne says.

“We passed all the ethical committees and all the ethical checks and balances,” he says.

And what in the hell does *that* tell you?

The idea here is to create a new method for the fertility industry, in which women will be paid to mass produce embryos within their bodies — surrogate conception, let’s call it — which will then be flushed out in the lab. After that, embryos will be subjected to quality control procedures — perhaps including sex selection. Those that pass quality control will be implanted in women who want to give birth or who become pregnant as surrogate “gestational carriers,” in the dehumanizing parlance of the industry. And all for big bucks.

Big Fertility is fast becoming a moral hazard.

Stem Cell Research:

FACTS . . . & FALLACIES

What are stem cells, and why are scientists so interested in them?

"A stem cell is a cell that has the ability to divide (self replicate) for indefinite periods . . . Under the right conditions, or given the right signals, stem cells can give rise (differentiate) to the many different cell types that make up the organism. That is, stem cells have the potential to develop into mature cells that have characteristic shapes and specialized functions, such as heart cells, skin cells, or nerve cells." Scientists envision drawing from "lines" of stem cells—colonies of similar cells that can replicate for long periods—to create new specialized cells for transplant into patients, to repair or replace tissues that disease and disability have damaged.¹

Where are stem cells found?

In the adult organism ("adult" referring to humans or animals any point after birth) stem cells are found in the bone marrow, blood stream, brain, spinal cord, dental pulp, skeletal muscle, skin, gastrointestinal tract, cornea, retina, liver, and pancreas. Another rich source of stem cells is the blood within umbilical cords and placentas no longer needed by newborn babies.¹ New research shows human fat contains stem cells.²

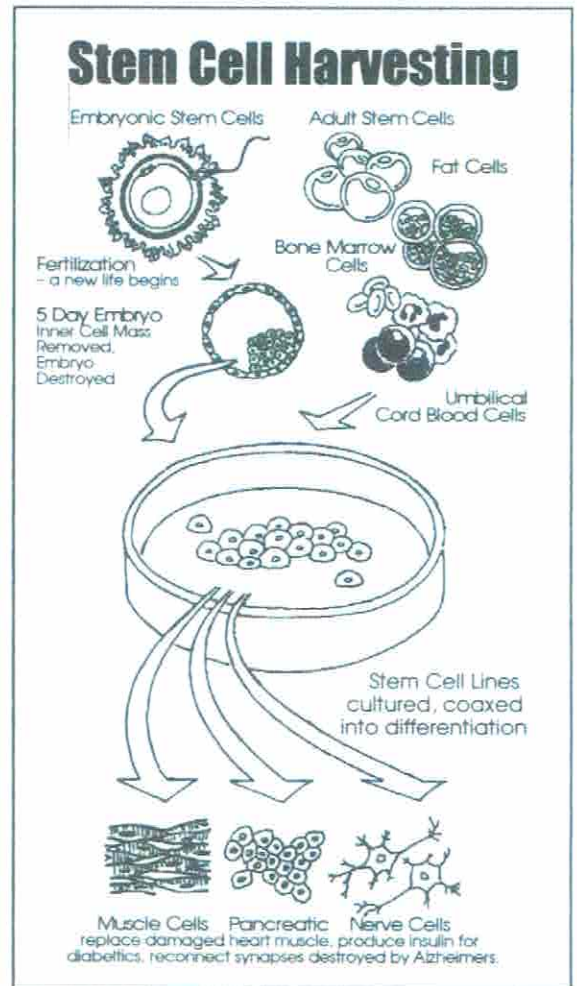
The stem cells receiving the most public attention are found within human embryos. Researchers harvest these cells by pulling the "inner cell mass," the 30-34 cells that will develop into the baby's tissues and organs, from the center of a five-day-old embryo.¹

What is the problem with stem cell research?

Adult stem cell research is not controversial; no human being dies when these cells are collected. The moral problem arises because stem cell harvesting from embryos would destroy them.³

Is the enthusiasm for embryonic stem cell research justified?

Human embryonic stem cells (ESCs) have not yet successfully treated disease.⁴ Currently, the National Institutes of Health says that "any therapies based on the use of human ES cells are still hypothetical and highly experimental." Scientists are still figuring out how to induce the cells to change into particular types of cells. Other problems the researchers have encountered include: the tendency of ESCs to form tumors when they are transplanted into a patient, unstable expression of traits contained in the cells' genes, immune rejection, and the risk of passing animal viruses to humans because formulas of animal cells are used to keep ESC lines growing.^{1, 2}



CROSSING A CRITICAL MORAL LINE

Even some who support legal abortion worry that society's sanction of research that would destroy human embryos may set a dangerous moral precedent. We are "crossing a major boundary without any sense of how significant a boundary it is," says Duke theologian Amy Hall.¹⁶ Once we approve killing one human being to save the life of another, where do we stop? Should we create and clone embryos just for "spare parts?" Why stop at embryos? What about near-term fetuses, or even newborn infants? Why not calculate an individual's quality of life or projected social contribution and determine whether or not someone else is entitled to his or her organs? Hastings Center bioethicist Daniel Callahan supports abortion but opposes stem cell research that would destroy human embryos because once started, "there is no logical place to draw the line."¹⁷ The *Washington Post* says, "even moralists without fixed views on abortion are queasy about the idea of scientists mass-producing embryos for a goal other than human reproduction. For them, any amount of scientific progress is cold comfort in a future where human dignity is no longer the first priority."¹⁸

What is the current state of research on adult stem cells?

Doctors already use adult stem cells to treat a host of human diseases, including cancers, autoimmune diseases, stroke, cartilage and bone damage, and blood and liver diseases. Scientists are continually discovering new capabilities of adult stem cells. For example, using mice and rats, scientists have regrown nerve cells, reversed diabetes, and repaired hearts damaged by heart attack. There is also evidence of a universal adult stem cell that can change into any cell of the body.^{1, 4, 5-7}

Despite the reported "promise" of embryonic stem cells, stem cells from adults are the ones that have been delivering true therapy. Dr. Donald Orlic of the National Human Genome Research Institute states, "We are currently finding that these adult stem cells can function as well, perhaps even better than, embryonic stem cells."⁷

THERE ARE NO "EXCESS" EMBRYOS.

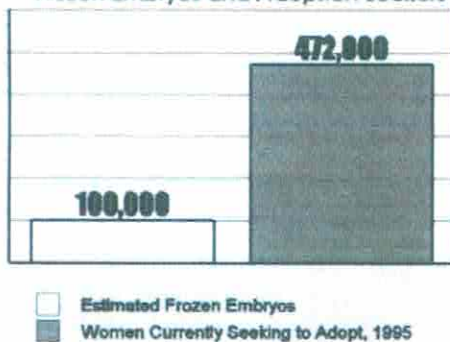
Advocates of ESC research want to use frozen embryos from fertility clinics as their main source of stem cells. Often dubbed "leftover," "surplus," "spare," or "excess," these embryos were conceived during in vitro fertilization but were not implanted in a mother's womb. Fertility clinics typically offer three options to couples for the embryos that are not implanted: destroy them, donate them to another couple, or freeze them and store them in case the first attempt at pregnancy fails or the couple wants to give birth to more of their children later. Overwhelmingly, couples choose to freeze their embryos.⁸ Today, an estimated 100,000 embryos wait in cryo-banks.⁹

Proponents of ESC research argue that these embryos will be disposed of anyway, but the destiny of frozen embryos is not necessarily destruction. In one study, 59 percent of parents who originally intended to discard their embryos within three years changed their minds, instead attempting another pregnancy or donating their embryos to another couple.¹⁰ The American Society for Reproductive Medicine tells fertility clinics that they may destroy frozen embryos after five years of attempts to reach parents for a decision. Doctors, however, are reluctant to end the embryos' lives.⁸

Frozen embryos have also been adopted by couples who would like to become parents but have not been able to conceive a child on their own. This alternative is only now rising to public attention. Through the

Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program, for example, eight babies have been born since the program's 1997 founding, and five more are on the way.¹¹ In 1995, approximately 472,000 ever-married women described themselves as currently seeking to adopt a child. Another five million said they would consider adoption at some time in the future.¹²

Frozen Embryos and Adoption Seekers



Hannah: An Embryo's Story

"Millions of times a year, egg genome meets sperm genome, and the result is a human baby, its parts all in place, its brain a universe of love and meaning."

- *New York Times*, June 27, 2000



Hannah Strege was one of these "spare" frozen embryos before Marlene and John Strege adopted her through the Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program in 1998.

"She required a place to grow, nutrients and love—her same basic needs today—but Hannah did the rest."

- Marlene Strege, House testimony, 7/17/01



Hannah at 2 years old, with happy mom, Marlene.

NOTES: 1. NIH, *Stem Cells: Scientific Progress and Future Research Directions*, 6/01 2. Weiss, *Washington Post*, 4/10/01, 7/6/01 3. Nat'l Bioethics Advisory Comm., *Ethical Issues in Stem Cell Research*, 9/99 4. Prentice Testimony, stemcellresearch.org 5. Goodman, *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/1/01 6. Ramiya, *Nature Medicine*, 3/00 7. Bazell, *MSNBC.com*, 3/30/03 8. Stolberg, *N Y Times*, 2/25/01 9. Friedrich, *JAMA*, 8/9/00 10. Klock, *NEJM*, 7/5/01 11. Davidson Testimony, 7/17/01 12. Chandra, *NCHS*, 1999 13. ABC News/BeliefNet Poll, 6/01 14. NBC News/Wall St Jnl Poll, 6/01 15. Harris Poll, 7/01 16. Raspberry, *Washington Post*, 7/20/01 17. Hunt, *Wall St Jnl*, 7/12/01 18. Rosin, *Washington Post*, 11/6/98

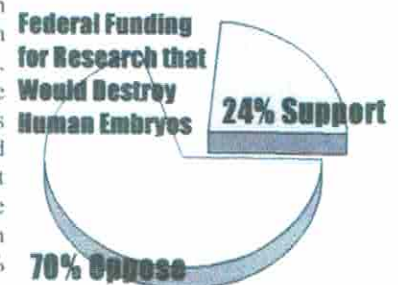


NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE
Educational Trust Fund
www.nrlc.org 0/01

AMERICANS SUPPORT STEM CELL RESEARCH ... BUT NOT IF A HUMAN EMBRYO DIES.

Proponents of research that would require destroying human embryos cite wide public support. Their polls, however, often fail to mention that embryos would be destroyed for their stem cells.¹³⁻¹⁵ Consider the results from a poll that shared this fact:

International Communications Research asked "Stem cells are the basic cells from which all of a person's tissues and organs develop. Congress is considering whether to provide federal funding for experiments using stem cells from human embryos. The live embryos would be destroyed in their first week of development to obtain these cells. Do you support or oppose using your federal tax dollars for such experiments?" Given these details, 69.9% opposed government funding of such research. Only 23.9% expressed support.



International Communications Research
June 1-5, 2001