

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE BAR
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
42 WEST 44TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10036-6689

COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LEGISLATION

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April 28, 2005

VIA TELECOPIER – (202) 228-0359
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The Honorable Mike Enzi
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-6300

Re: S. 471. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

Dear Senator Enzi:

We write on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York (“Association of the Bar”) to express our strong support for S. 471, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005. S. 471 appropriately expands federal support for stem cell research beyond the current federal stem cell research program, and sets strict, but workable, standards to guard against the misuse of human embryonic materials.

Stem cell research holds enormous promise as scientists work to unravel the mysteries of human development and find cures to many devastating illnesses. According to the National Institutes of Health, human stem cells have the potential to treat patients who would now need an organ transplant, as well as those suffering from diseases including Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s diseases, spinal cord injury, stroke, burns, heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

However, because human stem cells can be harvested from human embryos, there must be strict guidelines in place to prevent the unethical development, distribution, or use of the embryonic material.

President Bush announced a federal government plan for stem cell research in 2001 that aimed to allow a limited amount of scientific research on stem cells to go forward while eliminating any future harvesting of cells from human embryos. Unfortunately, the President’s plan has not been successful. In particular, while President Bush announced 78 stem cell derivations available for research purposes, scientists have access to only 22 lines. Moreover, the 22 lines are not proving productive for use in

The Honorable Mike Enzi

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S. 471 would allow stem cell research to progress. It would effectively eliminate the current restriction that scientists use only existing stem cell lines and would allow federal funding for research on stem cells that are derived in the future from embryos in limited circumstances. In particular, scientists could only use cells from embryos that were created for the purposes of fertility treatment. In addition, the embryo in question could only be used if it would otherwise have been discarded, and it can only be donated by the persons receiving fertility treatment without compensation and with full knowledge of how the cells will be used. These restrictions are essential to protect against the many potential abuses in embryo development and distribution.

We believe that stem cell research must go forward, but only if we can ensure that it goes forward responsibly and with adequate safeguards. S. 471 meets this standard. On behalf of the more than 23,000 members of the Association of the Bar of New York City, I would like to thank you for your attention to this important matter and urge you to ensure prompt passage of this significant legislation.

Very truly yours,



John Siffert
Chair

cc: Betsy Plevan, President
Barbara Berger Opatowsky, Executive Director
Alan Rothstein, General Counsel

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April 28, 2005

VIA TELECOPIER – (202) 228-1264
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The Honorable Bill Frist, M.D.
Majority Leader
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 471. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

Dear Senator Frist:

We write on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York (“Association of the Bar”) to express our strong support for S. 471, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005. S. 471 appropriately expands federal support for stem cell research beyond the current federal stem cell research program, and sets strict, but workable, standards to guard against the misuse of human embryonic materials.

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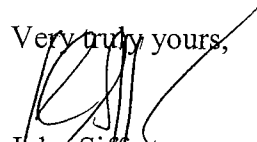
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Chair

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April 28, 2005

VIA TELECOPIER – (202) 224-7327
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Senator Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 471. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

Dear Senator Reid:

We write on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York (“Association of the Bar”) to express our strong support for S. 471, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005. S. 471 appropriately expands federal support for stem cell research beyond the current federal stem cell research program, and sets strict, but workable, standards to guard against the misuse of human embryonic materials.

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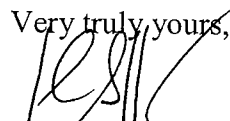
Senator Harry Reid
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April 28, 2005

VIA TELECOPIER – (202) 228-5787
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Senator Edward Kennedy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions
315 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 471. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

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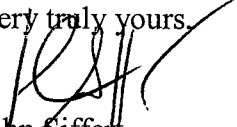
Senator Edward Kennedy
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April 28, 2005

VIA TELECOPIER – (617) 565-3183
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Senator Edward Kennedy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health, Education,
Labor & Pensions
2400 JFK Building
Boston, MA 02203

Re: S. 471. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

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