CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

P.O. Box 4343, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-4343 (925) 944-5351

E-Mail: callife@calright2life.org **Web Site: www.calright2life.org**

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The Federal Personhood Amendment

American Life League has collaborated with medical ethicists, constitutional lawyers and veteran pro-lifers to formulate American Life League's Federal Personhood Amendment. The proposed amendment states the following:

Purpose

To establish that legal personhood is granted to all human beings in the United States from the beginning of their biological development.

Section 1

The right to life is the paramount and most fundamental right of a person.

Section 2

With respect to the right to life guaranteed to persons by the fifth and 14th articles of amendment to the Constitution, the word "person" applies to all human beings; irrespective of age, health, function, physical dependency or method of reproduction; including their unborn offspring; at every stage of their biological development.

The Federal Personhood Amendment is unlike all other pro-life legislation in that it guarantees the right to life of ALL people from the moment of creation until natural death.

Section 3

Congress and the several States, including territories under United States control, shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Section 4 Definitions:

Human being: Any organism, including the single-cell human embryo, irrespective of the method of reproduction, who possesses a genome specific for and consistent with an individual member of the human species.

Human genome: The total amount of nuclear and extra-nuclear DNA genetic material that constitutes an organism as an individual member of the human species—including the single-cell human embryo.

Human embryo: The term is used to define all human beings from the beginning of the embryonic period of their biological development through eight weeks; irrespective of age, health, function, physical dependency or method of reproduction; whether in vivo or in vitro.

Human fetus: The term is used to define all human beings from the beginning of the fetal period of their biological development (the beginning of nine weeks) through birth; irrespective of age, health, function, physical dependency or method of reproduction, whether in vivo or in vitro.

Personhood: The legal recognition of a human being's full status as a human person that applies to all human beings; irrespective of age, health, function, physical dependency or method of reproduction; including their unborn offspring; at every stage of their biological development.

The use of certain terminology must be considered with regard to human reproduction. The common terms used to refer to the moment that a human being's life begins are "fertilization" and "conception." We encourage you to reconsider the use of these terms for the following reasons.

Fertilization is now only one method of reproducing members of the human species. It is a medically accurate term but not sufficient, because humans are now also created artificially, that is, by asexual means not involving fertilization. To use the term "fertilization" when referring to the moment that a new human being comes into existence would consequently exclude from this document's intended scope a whole class of people who are reproduced asexually.

Although "conception" is commonly used by the general public, it is expressly and universally rejected as a scientific term by embryologists, scientists and medical professionals, and thus

does not adequately support the concept of personhood. In addition, the term is not always understood to refer to the act of fertilization and is often erroneously taken to mean "implantation." In many states, as well as in literally dozens of national and international medical and research organizations (including the American College of Gynecologists and Obstetricians), the term "conception" is defined as "beginning at implantation." ACOG adopted this new definition in 1965 in response to political pressures and not as a result of scientific discovery. Thus, since the personhood movement aims to recognize all human beings, precise, unambiguous and scientifically accurate terminology is indispensable and of the utmost importance.

Instead of using the aforementioned terms, use the term point of creation instead of conception, or even fertilization. If explaining when a person comes into existence, explain that human embryology experts recognize that the life of each human being begins at his or her biological beginning or biological inception.

Stem Cell Research Updates

Compiled by John Naughton

*Below are some interesting **WORLDWIDE** medical advances using adult stem cells and some important findings regarding induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS) reported in the last few weeks.*

Multiple Sclerosis: US

The Lancet Neurology, 30 Jan 2009

A new study shows the reversal of neurological dysfunction of early-stage multiple sclerosis patients by transplanting their own immune stem cells into their bodies.

Dr. Robert Burt, the lead researcher on a team from Northwestern University, used hematopoietic, or blood-forming, stem cells extracted form a patient's bone marrow.

Three years after treatment, 17 of the 21 patients involved in the study saw improvement and none of the patients involved saw their MS conditions worsen during the follow-up time period.

"This is the first study to actually show reversal of disability," Burt, an associate professor in the division of immunotherapy at Northwestern, said in the study published in the British medical journal Lancet.

"Some people had complete disappearance of all symptoms." Late-stage patients did not improve.

Burt is now readying a large study with more patients from the United States as well as Canada and Brazil. "If the results of today's study are borne out in the new one, I think we can really change the way this disease is approached," Burt said.

Dr. Doug Brown, Research Manager at the UK MS Society, said: "These are very encouraging results and it's exciting to see that in this trial not only is progression of disability halted, but damage appears to be reversed."

ALS: Israel

BrainStorm Cell Therapeutics Inc., a leading developer of adult stem cell (ASC) technology, announced Feb 10, 2009 that it is preparing for clinical trials of ALS patients in Israel expected to begin late 2009 or early 2010.

The first clinical trials will focus on demonstrating safety. Since BrainStorm's cell treatment is based on Adult Stem Cells and an autologous transplantation, scientists say the treatment is safe, and they do not expect any adverse effects. Once successful, they will proceed to Phase II for efficacy.

HEART: UK

Revolutionary stem cell trials planned in the UK -- February 10, 2009

A group of British doctors are preparing for human clinical trials that will take a person's bone marrow stem cells, transform them into heart stem cells and inject them into the heart, where they can go to work repairing damage.

"Placing heart stem cells into the heart to repair has a very good chance of working; because the stem cells are the patient's own there are no problems with rejection," said Professor Sian Harding, of Imperial College London.

The British researchers plan to use a technique that was pioneered at the Mayo Clinic. They will remove 40 milliliters of bone marrow from a patient and then grow heart stem cells from them through the use of growth factors. Once injected

back into the heart, doctors say they can expect a physical improvement in the patient in as little as two weeks.

(Note: There have been many clinical trials using different approaches to using adult stem cells with outstanding improvement in heart function. It is still unknown if the ASCs transform into heart stem cells or if the ASCs cause the generation of heart stem cells.)

HEART: U.S.A.

Skin Cells Turned Into Working Heart Muscle

Circulation Research

Research could lead to new treatments for organ's diseases that have genetic cause

THURSDAY, Feb. 12 (HealthDay News) -- Induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells were used to create working heart-muscle cells (cardiomyocytes). "It's an encouraging result, because it shows that those cells will be useful for research and may someday be useful in therapy," lead researcher Tim Kamp, a professor of medicine at the UW Madison School of Medicine and Public Health, said in a university news release. "If you have a heart failure patient who is in dire straits -- and there are never enough donor hearts for transplantation -- we may be able to make heart cells from the patient's skin cells, and use them to repair heart muscle. That's pretty exciting."

Australia becomes iPS independent

Researcher produced induced pluripotent stem cells (iPS) for the first time, eliminating their dependency on the US or Japan for iPS cells -- the kind that are embryonic-like but don't require the destruction of human life to obtain. "Until now, in Australia we have relied on people to give us (iPS) cell lines to do any work ... we were at the mercy of whoever would give us cell lines," Dr Verma said. "This definitely gives us a way to produce a lot of cell lines ... and if you can get away from the ethics of it then why not?" Future work in Australia includes creating iPS cells from an adult with Type 1 diabetes, with the results expected to provide new insights into how the illness progresses.

Single Factor Converts Adult Stem Cells Into Embryonic-Like Stem Cells

Cell -- 06 Feb 2009 -Neural stem cells taken from adult mice can take on the characteristics of embryonic stem cells with the addition of a single transcription factor. Transcription factors are genes that control the activity of other genes. The initial discovery of human iPS required four factors. Subsequent studies found that the four-ingredient recipe could in some cases be pared down to two or three essential ingredients, said Hans Schöler of the Max Planck Institute for Molecular Biomedicine in Germany. "Now we've come down to just one that is sufficient. In terms of the biology, it's really quite amazing."

SCI Paralysis Reversed In Animals -- Stem Cells Jan 29, 2009

A new study has found that transplantation of stem cells from the lining of the spinal cord, called ependymal stem cells, reverses paralysis associated with spinal cord injuries in laboratory tests. The findings show that the population of these cells after spinal cord injury was many times greater than comparable cells from healthy animal subjects. The results open a new window on spinal cord regenerative strategies.

The transplanted cells were found to proliferate after spinal cord injury and were recruited by the specific injured area.

When these cells were transplanted into animals with spinal cord injury, they regenerated ten times faster while in the transplant subject than similar cells derived from healthy control animals.

The presence of these stem cells in the adult human spinal cords suggests that stem cell-associated mechanisms might be exploited to repair human spinal cord injuries.

Stem cell transplant gives him gift of sight

Deepa Suryanarayan Friday, February 13, 2009 Mumbai: Two-year-old Pratik Patil does not know it yet, but he has just been bestowed with the gift of sight, thanks to a procedure performed for the first time in Mumbai.

The procedure -- limbal stem cell transfer -- involved taking healthy stem cells from Pratik's unaffected eye, culturing (growing) them in a laboratory, and then transferring them to the affected eye. "When he was brought to Bombay Hospital, Pratick’s cornea was clouded; his eyelids were almost glued shut. He was suffering

from xerosis (severe dryness in the eyes) and limbal stem cell deficiency," said Dr Sonia Nankani, consulting eye surgeon. This condition is seen among patients suffering from Vitamin A deficiency, Steven Johnson's syndrome, allergic reaction, trauma to the eyes, heat burns or chemical injuries.

"The limbal stem cells taken from Pratik's healthy eye and were cultured. Then on January 15, in a 45-minute procedure, the newly cultured stem cells along with the amniotic membrane were transferred to Pratik's affected eye. Research over the past 10 years, has established the high success rate of growing the new cells from transplanted limbal stem cells.

"But even if it is not completely successful, the limbal stem cell transplant will buy us the time to perform corneal transplant after six months," said Nankani.

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WHO IS CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE?

This is the newsletter of **California Right to Life Education Fund**, a 501-c-3 organization established to educate the public about pro-life issues. Donations to the EDUCATION FUND are **tax-deductible** and can be sent to P.O. Box 4343, Walnut Creek, CA 94596-0343.

California Right to Life **Committee, Inc.** is a501-c-4 organization providing information on legislative issues affecting the right to life, and pro-life political advocacy. **CRLC, Inc. is not permitted**, under IRS regulations, to offer a tax deduction for donations. $24.99 annually is requested for a subscription to the CRLC legislative email updates list and can be sent to 1920 Monument Blvd #309, Concord, CA 94520.

Both are affiliates of American Life League, headed by Judie Brown, and share the same “no-exceptions, no excuses” beliefs and the same dedication to promoting the Culture of Life, respecting all innocent human life from the single-cell stage to natural death.