



WISCONSIN CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

For Immediate Release

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Passage of Bill to Prohibit Human Cloning Affirms Dignity of Human Life at All Stages

John Huebscher, WCC Executive Director offered the following statement regarding the State Senate's passage of AB 499:

With the passage of AB 499 the Senate has affirmed that the public has a role, indeed a responsibility, to establish boundaries for ethical research. The Senate has rejected efforts to differentiate between "research" and "reproductive" cloning and instead looked to the science, which shows that all human cloning forms a new human embryo - a new human life.

Human life is not something we protect out of generosity nor is it something that owes its value to material promise. It is a gift that, when disvalued for some, becomes disvalued for all.

Wisconsin's progressive tradition has long held that economic development is not incompatible with respect and concern for those who are vulnerable. The Senate's action continues to move Wisconsin forward, establishing protection of human life at all stages as a preeminent value - a value that will ultimately serve Wisconsin well and stand the test of time.

The Governor has stated his intention to veto this legislation because "respect for human life means you don't turn your back on cures that can save lives." The issue is not whether or not one supports cures, but whether or not one supports unlimited means to arrive at those cures.

Science and society have always accepted that there are certain boundaries that must be maintained in order to protect human beings from becoming mere scientific subjects. Opposition to human cloning does not mean that one is more opposed to curing cancer or Parkinson's disease anymore than those with moral qualms about the Tuskegee experiments opposed cures to venereal disease. History contains many examples of medical research that we now universally reject as inhumane.

In the context of this debate it is concern for our common humanity, not a lack of compassion, which leads us to prefer research avenues that do not compel the destruction of human life and to discourage those that do. AB 499 draws a line that will not stop the advancement of scientific knowledge and the discovery of cures, but instead points the way toward ethical means of achieving those shared goals.

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