



Alan I. Leshner
Chief Executive Officer and
Executive Publisher, *Science*

July 18, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

The U.S. Senate has just approved H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, which would expand federal support for embryonic stem cell research. Along with millions of patients, their families and physicians, and elected officials of both major parties, we in the scientific community are hopeful that you will review this measure with an open mind and open heart and then sign it into law.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, like the majority of the American people, recognizes the great potential in human embryonic stem cell research. The scientific consensus, accepted by most voters, is that embryonic stem cell research is an extremely promising approach to developing more effective treatments for devastating conditions like diabetes, spinal cord injuries, and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases.

We recently testified in the U.S. Senate that while all avenues of stem cell research should be explored, stem cells derived from early-stage human embryos appear by far to hold the greatest therapeutic promise. We understand that you object to creating and then destroying embryos explicitly for the purpose of deriving stem cells for research. However, H.R. 810 allows the use of cell lines derived from the embryos left over from *in vitro* fertilization techniques. There are some 400,000 such embryos in clinics around the country. Many of these left-over embryos will be discarded and could be donated for research. We believe it would serve a high moral purpose for the federal government to take full advantage of their availability for research to help improve and save lives.

Moreover, H.R. 810 would enable the Federal government to exercise a higher level of regulation and ethical oversight over human embryonic stem cell research than it can now.

The Honorable George W. Bush
July 18, 2006
Page Two

Our concern, like yours, is for the well-being of humanity, and we see H.R. 810 as an affirmation of life, and of the potential of scientific and medical research to improve the human condition. We are gratified to stand with a broad coalition of Americans that spans all parties and faiths who urge you to approve this bill in the interest of alleviating suffering and advancing human progress.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Gilbert S. Omenn in cursive script.

Gilbert S. Omenn, M.D., Ph.D.
Chairman of the AAAS Board of Directors

Handwritten signature of Alan I. Leshner in cursive script.

Alan I. Leshner, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer, AAAS