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**BISHOPS' STATEMENT ON ADVANCES IN STEM CELL RESEARCH**

DATE: December 20, 2007

As the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Massachusetts, we applaud the recent stem cell announcements from Japan and Wisconsin. Researchers have confirmed that pluripotent stem cells can be created without need of cloning and destroying human embryos. Scientists agree that the new techniques offer real promise for finding cures.

The approach taken in the new studies avoids the moral objections associated with research requiring the destruction of human embryos. That unethical practice disregards human life and has not produced a single clinical benefit. Instead, the groundbreaking discoveries advance both science and ethics.

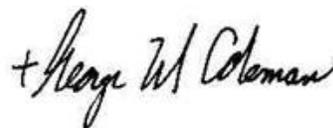
In light of the exciting developments in the stem cell field, we renew our call for the promotion of biotechnology in the Commonwealth that abides by the highest ethical regard for the sanctity of human life. The recent advances show that good science and respect for life can work together.

Stem cell legislation filed in the State Legislature by the Governor, similar to other bills filed by various legislators, proposes public funding to promote experiments fatal to human embryos. These experiments are performed on embryos to acquire stem cells that the new studies now demonstrate can be created through ethical means. We continue to oppose this legislation in its current form as unjust and unnecessary. We ask the Legislature to craft stem cell legislation promoting only research that respects human dignity.

Moreover, there is a rush to enact this legislation within the next few months. We urge our elected officials to conduct the legislative process at a more deliberate pace. This would accommodate full consideration of the new research findings and their bearing on the misplaced priorities currently endorsed by the Governor's stem cell legislation and its companion bills. With so much at stake, careful assessment and not haste, is in order.



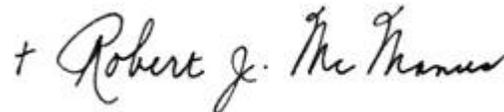
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