

## Castle Reintroduces Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act -- January 9, 2007

Washington D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle, along with Congresswoman Diana DeGette (D-CO) today introduced the "Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007" (H.R. 3), which would ethically expand the federal policy regarding embryonic stem cell research in the United States. The bill is identical to H.R. 810 which Congressman Castle authored and sponsored and was vetoed by President Bush in July 2006.

"I am proud to still be at the forefront of this issue as we continue to push the crucial issue of embryonic stem cell research. This effort has never been solely about my bill; it has been on behalf of the research and the work for a cure for the tens of millions of patients suffering worldwide from diseases such as Juvenile Diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, cancer and AIDS. For that reason, I hope that we may make the bill more palatable to President Bush, either in the Senate or in Conference so that it stands more of a chance of being signed and so that the research can move forward.

"As the debate continues on this bill on Thursday, it is important to remember the facts. The decision to discard the embryo which will be used for the research will already have been made and only then can a couple donate an embryo for research. All other options are open to them, including embryo adoption. Additionally, embryonic stem cells are pluripotent and can turn into any cell in the body which is much more useful for research than adult stem cells and currently, embryonic stem cells are the only area of stem cell research restricted at the federal level. It is time to update the federal policy to enable scientists in the United States to participate in the race for cures and treatments," Castle said.

### Summary of H.R. 3, 'The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act':

The Secretary of Health & Human Services shall conduct and support research on stem cells that have been derived from embryos ONLY if the following requirements are met:

1. Embryos used to derive stem cells were originally created for fertility treatment purposes and are in excess of clinical need.
2. The individuals seeking fertility treatments for whom the embryos were created have determined that the embryos will not be implanted in a woman and will otherwise be discarded; and
3. The individuals for whom the embryos were created have provided written consent for embryo donation and without receiving financial inducement.

The Secretary, in consultation with the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), shall issue guidelines 60 days after enactment. These guidelines shall ensure that federally funded researchers adhere to ethical considerations. The Secretary shall annually report to Congress about NIH funded stem cell research.

### Important Notes:

- Embryos cannot be created for research purposes.
- There is no federal funding for the derivation of the stem cell lines -- only for research.
- There is no funding for somatic cell nuclear transfer or therapeutic cloning.

\*Please contact the office for a letter addressed to Congressman Castle and Congresswoman DeGette from Anthony Atala, MD at Wake Forest University stating that his research regarding the potential of stem cells found in amniotic fluid is not a replacement for the potential for cures from embryonic stem cell research.

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