



Pro-Life Activities

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

DATE: June 6, 2007
FROM: William Ryan
O: 202-541-3200
H: 202-686-1824

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARDINAL RIGALI URGES HOUSE TO REJECT TWO BILLS PROMOTING DESTRUCTION OF HUMAN EMBRYOS

WASHINGTON— As the U.S. House of Representatives prepared to vote on the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research (S. 5) as well as a bill sponsored by Cong. Diana DeGette to allow human cloning (H.R. 2560), Cardinal Justin Rigali urged Representatives to reject such legislation promoting the destruction of human embryos. “I urge you to vote against S. 5, and against the DeGette bill allowing cloning for research purposes – on behalf of taxpayers who should not be forced to help destroy innocent life, and on behalf of genuine progress for suffering patients,” the Cardinal said.

Cardinal Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia, is Chairman of the Committee for Pro-Life Activities at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

In his June 6 letter to House members, Cardinal Rigali warned that pursuit of destructive embryonic stem cell research “will almost certainly require you to embrace more and more egregious violations of moral norms in the effort to bring its ‘promise’ to fruition,” citing cloning legislation such as the DeGette bill as one example.

The Cardinal clarified the purpose of the proposed cloning bill: “H.R. 2560 may be promoted as a ban on human cloning. But it is exactly the opposite.”

The DeGette bill, he said, “allows unlimited cloning of human embryos for research – and then makes it a crime to transfer the embryo to a womb to allow the new human being to survive. What it actually prohibits is the act of becoming pregnant – a kind of law seen chiefly until now in the People’s Republic of China, where women can be punished for carrying an unauthorized child. For the first time in U.S. law, Congress would define a class of new developing human beings that it is a crime *not* to destroy.”

The full text of the Cardinal’s letter will be available at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/bioethic/stemcell/s5hr2560letter.pdf>

###