



Pro-Life Activities

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARDINAL RIGALI COMMENDS PRESIDENT BUSH FOR VETO OF DESTRUCTIVE EMBRYO RESEARCH BILL

WASHINGTON— Today President Bush vetoed the “Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act” (S. 5), and issued an Executive Order supporting alternative means for obtaining and using very versatile or “pluripotent” stem cells. Cardinal Justin Rigali, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Chairman of the Committee for Pro-Life Activities at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued the following statement in response to the President’s actions:

“I commend President Bush today for vetoing S. 5, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. This bill would not actually enhance stem cell research, but divert federal funds away from legitimate research toward avenues requiring the destruction of innocent human life. The cause of science is not enhanced but diminished when it loses its moral compass.

“Also welcome today is the President’s executive order directing the National Institutes of Health to explore alternative, ethically acceptable means for obtaining very versatile or ‘pluripotent’ stem cells. Recent discoveries regarding stem cells from cord blood and amniotic fluid, and the reprogramming of ordinary adult cells to become pluripotent stem cells, demonstrate that science not only raises new ethical questions but at times can help address them. Adult stem cells continue to produce new clinical advances on a regular basis, most recently showing benefits for patients with juvenile diabetes.

“Tragically, some embryonic stem cell advocates in Congress have dismissed such advances or even greeted them with suspicion, as though medical progress were less genuine or praiseworthy when it respects early human life. I urge them to follow the President’s lead on this issue, by promoting research and therapies that everyone can live with.”

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