



House
Democratic
Policy
Committee

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NEWS RELEASE

State Rep. Stephen H. Stetler
D-York
Chairman, Democratic Policy Committee
www.pahouse.com/stetler

Hearing Hosts

State Rep. Tom Tangretti, D-Westmoreland
State Rep. Tom Tigue, D-Luzerne/Monroe
State Rep. Richard Grucela, D-Northampton



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Democratic Policy Committee continues study of stem-cell research

HARRISBURG, July 25 – The House Democratic Policy Committee today held its third hearing this session on stem-cell research, according to Policy Committee Chairman Stephen H. Stetler, D-York.

Requested and hosted by state Reps. Tom Tangretti, D-Westmoreland, Tom Tigue, D-Luzerne/Monroe, and Richard Grucela, D-Northampton, the hearing mainly focused on the pro-life perspective and featured testimony from Steve Johnson and his daughter Zara, participants in the Snowflake Frozen Embryo Adoption Program; Stephen Webster, president and CEO of Nureonyx; Dr. Gary Friedman, trustee, New Jersey Stem Cell Research and Education Foundation; the Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, director of Education for National Catholic Bioethics Center; and Dr. Katherine High, director of the Center for Cellular and Molecular Therapeutics at the Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania.

“Stem-cell research is a complex issue that deserves to be explored from all perspectives,” Stetler said. “Even though pro-life members have a different view than me, I still think it is important to have this hearing from their perspective. Hopefully, a better mutual understanding can be achieved by having an open dialogue with both sides of this debate, whether it is legislators, the public, or experts.”

Tangretti said, “Today's hearing demonstrated why it is vital to hear all sides of an issue, especially those that are controversial. I hope members of the committee now have a deeper realization of the pro-life perspective surrounding embryonic stem cell research.”

Tigue added, “I thank Chairman Stetler for having this hearing today, so the committee could hear more testimony on stem-cell research from experts who understand the ethical concerns and the potential dangers.”

Grucela said, “I am glad the committee was able to shine a stronger light today on the pro-life considerations of stem-cell research. While scientific advancement can be exciting, it is critical to evaluate the ethical effects of any research.”

Stetler is co-chairman of the House Life Sciences Caucus. Tigue, Tangretti and Grucela are members of the House Pro-Life Caucus.

HDPC's two previous hearings on stem-cell research were held Aug. 3 in Pittsburgh and Sept. 21 in Philadelphia. Those hearings also included testifiers from both sides of the issue.

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Clory, Cynthia

From: Tangretti, Thomas
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2006 8:42 AM
To: Clory, Cynthia
Subject: FW: added language to Act 66
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Red

For our prolife file.

From: Nancy Staible [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 07, 2006 2:36 PM
To: Tangretti, Thomas
Subject: FW: added language to Act 66

Representative Tangretti,
On behalf of Concerned Women for America of Pennsylvania, I want to thank you for your principled leadership in successfully inserting the added language to Act 66 that will separate family planning services Provision from abortion provision. Knowing that annual negotiations for the insertion of this language will no longer be necessary gives us great encouragement and peace. Though we continue to oppose the funding of Planned Parenthood with state tax dollars, we recognize this as a giant step forward in that effort. Again many thanks for your work and votes on behalf of life.

Nancy Staible
Pennsylvania State Director
Concerned Women for America
PO Box 96
Zelienople, PA 16063
724-452-7325

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8/24/2006

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

February 14, 2006

Rep. Stephen H Stetler
414 Main Capitol Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

Dear Steve:

We the undersigned Members of the Democratic Pro-Life Caucus are extremely disappointed by your unequal treatment concerning the Policy Committee's hearing agenda about the contentious embryonic stem cell funding issue. As you know, on no less than three occasions you had indicated that our group would have the opportunity to have a hearing in which we would be able to invite the testifiers as was afforded the pro choice Members with their hearings in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia.

What further troubles our Members is that this one-sided presentation of the stem cell debate furthers the misconception that the Democratic Caucus fully supports the research funding for embryonic stem cells. We understand the difference of opinion on this matter but we believe that a fair treatment of the issue would only have enhanced the public debate. However, now that the Governor has announced his intentions to find a way to fund this questionable research and our Policy Committee's public support for this position now furthers the public perception that all Democrats support this proposal.

There are many Members of our Caucus that believe the wisest, safest and most promising use of our precious tax dollars would be to invest in adult stem cell research. There is verifiable and extensive academic research to support such a position. But once again, as with the gun issue, our Caucus is perceived as one dimensional. This is not right politically or fair to a large number of our Members.

We are requesting that a meeting be convened of a representative group of the Pro-Life Democratic Caucus with our Leadership to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Thomas A. Tangretti.
Thomas A. Tangretti

Handwritten signature of Richard Grucela.
Richard Grucela

Handwritten signature of Thomas M. Tighe.
Thomas M Tighe

John E Pallone
✓ John E Pallone

Michael K Hanna Sr
✓ Michael K Hanna, Sr.

Dan A Surra
✓ Dan A Surra

Anthony J Melio
✓ Anthony J Melio

Harry A Readshaw
✓ Harry A Readshaw

John T Yudichak
✓ John T Yudichak

Gaynor Cawley
✓ Gaynor Cawley

Ted R Harhaj
✓ Ted R Harhaj

Thomas C Corrigan
✓ Thomas C Corrigan

Joseph A Petrarca
✓ Joseph A Petrarca

Gary Haluska
✓ Gary Haluska

Edward Wojnarowski Sr
✓ Edward Wojnarowski, Sr.

Tony DeLuca
✓ Tony DeLuca

James E Shaner
✓ James E Shaner

Tom Yewcic
✓ Tom Yewcic

- cc: ~~Honorable H. William DeWeese~~
~~Honorable Mike Veon~~
~~Honorable Mark Cohen~~
~~Honorable Kevin Blaum~~
~~Honorable Fred Belardi~~
~~Honorable Dwight Evnas~~

BABETTE JOSEPHS, MEMBER
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all

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Memorandum

Date: April 3, 2006
To: All House Members
From: Representative Babette Josephs
Subject: Embryonic Stem Cell Research

You may not be aware that Maryland has recently passed legislation to authorize the use of state funds to support embryonic stem cell research. Maryland will be the fourth state to finance the restricted research with state money. Other states that allow the use of state funds for this vital research are California, New Jersey and Connecticut.

My proposal, HB 864, would authorize the use of state dollars for embryonic stem cell research. How many other states will show their compassion for those who are suffering with debilitating diseases and conditions such as diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and paralysis by funding embryonic stem cell research? How long will our constituents have to wait for Pennsylvania to offer them similar hope for cures?

I have attached two newspaper articles on this subject for your review.