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*The Institute for Public Affairs is
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umbrella organization founded
in 1898.*

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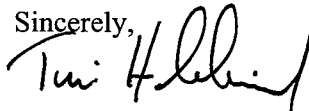
To Members of the U.S. Senate:

We write to you on behalf of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America – the nation's largest Orthodox Jewish umbrella organization – to express our support for (S.471/H.R.810) the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005 as well as the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005 (S.1317) and other measures soon to be considered by the Senate designed to expand and enhance the capacity of medical research associated with stem cells.

The Jewish tradition places great value upon human life and its preservation. The Torah commands us to treat and cure the ill and to defeat disease wherever possible; to do this is to be the Creator's partner in safeguarding the created. The traditional Jewish perspective thus emphasizes that the potential to save and heal human lives is an integral part of valuing human life. Moreover, the traditional Jewish perspective does not accord an embryo outside of the womb the full status of humanhood and its attendant protections. Thus, stem cell research may be consistent with and serve these moral and noble goals; however, such research must not be pursued indiscriminately.

S.471/H.R. 810 strikes this careful balance. By insisting that publicly funded stem cell research be conducted on cells derived from embryos donated to IVF clinics which will not serve the clinical need of the individuals seeking IVF treatment, and by requiring the prior consultation with and consent of the donors, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act serves to value and venerate the sanctity of life and our responsibilities to our fellow man and woman.

Because S.471/H.R. 810, as well as other bills, is consistent with the teachings of our faith and is in the interests of American society at large, we respectfully urge you to support this legislation when it is considered on the floor of the House.

Sincerely,

Rabbi T. Hersch Weinreb


Nathan J. Diament

For further information on the Orthodox Jewish perspective on this issue, please visit <http://www.ou.org/public/Publib/cloning.htm>