

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 7, 2025

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are grateful for the robust pro-life policies you have advanced from the beginning of your second term, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to prevent taxpayer dollars from funding the destruction of innocent life. As you work to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse in U.S. government agencies, we encourage you to stop funding for human embryonic stem cell research (hESC). Even though there are no FDA-approved hESC therapies on the market, taxpayers continue to fund this research. Meanwhile, ethical alternatives have been used to develop treatments for millions of patients.

Between Fiscal Years 2021-2023, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) spent nearly \$1 billion on hESC.¹ NIH estimates spending an additional \$318 million in Fiscal Year 2025. It has approved 503 hESC lines for use.² We believe pro-life Americans would be deeply troubled to learn of the extent of NIH's practices and ongoing plans.

In 2005, Rep. Chris Smith authored the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005³ (P.L. 109-129), ground-breaking legislation that transformed medical treatment by connecting patients needing treatment with genetically matched cord blood stem cells, providing new opportunities for patients to access cures. It was reauthorized by Congress in 2010, 2015, and 2020.^{4,5} In the past, virtually every placenta and umbilical cord was tossed as "medical waste". Today, doctors have turned this medical waste into medical miracles.

We have serious moral objections to hESC. The research relies on the death of young human beings. It is unethical to destroy human embryos for so-called "medical research purposes." Human life cannot be reduced to the level of a guinea pig; there is no such thing as a "spare human being" on whom it is permissible to conduct experiments which kill. The practice of funding this research has been a moral blot on NIH.

¹ NIH Categorical Spending Table. Accessed February 26, 2025. <https://report.nih.gov/funding/categorical-spending/#/>, searching on term "embryonic - human"

² "NIH Human Embryonic Stem Cell Registry." National Institutes of Health. Accessed February 26, 2025. <https://stemcells.nih.gov/registry/eligible-to-use-lines>

³ Congress.gov. H.R.2520 - Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/109th-congress/house-bill/2520/text/statute?statuteId=42387&s=2&r=20>

⁴ Congress.gov. H.R.2820 - Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2015. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2820/text?s=2&r=10>

⁵ Congress.gov. H.R.3520 - Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Reauthorization Act of 2019. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/3520>

In addition, after over twenty-five years of research, there are no FDA-approved hESC therapies on the market.⁶ An embryo's stem cells are pluripotent (able to differentiate to become different tissues and organs as the embryo grows). For that reason, hESC advocates twenty-five years ago claimed that hESC could unlock medical advances to treat diseases like Parkinson's disease. The predicted "biological miracles" never happened.⁷ By 2012, even Michael J. Fox, one of the most zealous hESC supporters, admitted that other "avenues of research have grown and multiplied and become as much or more promising." Mr. Fox said an answer for Parkinson's disease is "more than likely to come from another area."⁸ Yet, the federal government has lagged behind scientific progress; it continues to fund this outdated hESC research.

Successful ethical research exists, including adult stem cells, umbilical cord blood, and induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs); it has yielded and continues to unlock treatments for millions of patients worldwide.

Adult stem cell transplants had been used by 2012 to treat over 1 million patients worldwide for hematopoietic conditions (including blood cancers and blood disorders).⁹ By 2016 that number had already jumped to 1½ million treated. Today, the number would be well over 2 million.¹⁰ Adult stem cell transplants have been indicated as the standard of care or a clinical option not only in blood cancers and disorders but also in select immune and metabolic disorders as well as select solid tumors.¹¹ Researchers believe that adult stem cells hold promise in treating dozens of other conditions, including, according to the Center for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine, "type 1 diabetes (providing insulin-producing cells), heart attack (repairing cardiac muscle), and neurological disease (regenerating lost neurons in the brain or spinal cord)."¹² A review of the evidence from the published literature validates this therapeutic promise for adult stem cells.¹³

Blood from umbilical cords, discarded after labor and delivery, is a rich source for adult stem cells used in research, regenerative medicine, and transplantation.¹⁴ Umbilical cord blood

⁶ Tarne, Eugene. "Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research 25 Years On." Charlotte Lozier Institute *On Science Series* 15, October 2023. <https://lozierinstitute.org/human-embryonic-stem-cell-research-25-years-on/>

⁷ Tarne, Eugene. "Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research 25 Years On." October 30, 2023. <https://lozierinstitute.org/human-embryonic-stem-cell-research-25-years-on/>.

⁸ Goldman, Russell. "Michael J. Fox Looks Past Stem Cells in Search for Parkinson's Cure." *ABC News*, May 18, 2012. <https://abcnews.go.com/blogs/health/2012/05/18/michael-j-fox-looks-past-stem-cells-in-search-for-parkinsons-cure>

⁹ Gratwohl A et al; Worldwide Network for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (WBMT). One million haemopoietic stem-cell transplants: a retrospective observational study. *Lancet Haematol.* 2015;2:e91–e100. doi: [10.1016/S2352-3026\(15\)00028-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2352-3026(15)00028-9). <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/CIRCRESAHA.118.313664>

¹⁰ Niederwieser D et al., One and a half million hematopoietic stem cell transplants: continuous and differential improvement in worldwide access with the use of nonidentical family donors. *Haematologica* 107, 1045-1053, 2022. <https://haematologica.org/article/view/haematol.2021.279189>

¹¹ Snowden, John A. et al. "Indications for haematopoietic cell transplantation for haematological diseases, solid tumours and immune disorders: current practice in Europe, 2022." *Bone Marrow Transplantation* 57, 1217–1239, 2022. doi: [10.1038/s41409-022-01691-w](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41409-022-01691-w)

¹² Center for Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine. "Adult Stem Cells." University of Notre Dame. Accessed February 26, 2025. <https://stemcell.nd.edu/research/alternative-stem-cell-sources/adult-stem-cells/#:~:text=It%20is%20thought%20that%20adult,Notre%20Dame%20stem%20cell%20research.>

¹³ Prentice, David. "Adult Stem Cells: Successful Standard for Regenerative Medicine." *Circulation Research* 124, Number 6, 837-839. March 14, 2019

¹⁴ Sander Lee, Tara, Ph.D. Written Testimony. Subcommittees on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules and Government Operations for the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform "Exploring Alternatives to Fetal Tissue Research" December 13, 2018. <https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Sander-Lee-Testimony-HCBAR-GO-Fetal-Tissue-12.13.18.pdf>

can be used to treat over 75 diseases, including leukemia, lymphoma, and sickle cell disease.¹⁵ Patients who have been treated certainly know the benefits.¹⁶

iPSCs are “reprogrammed” adult somatic (body) cells, induced to create pluripotent stem cells that resemble embryonic stem cells.¹⁷ Dr. Shinya Yamanaka, who received the Nobel Prize in 2012 for the development of iPSCs, said his work was inspired by looking down a microscope at a human embryo.¹⁸ He said, “When I saw the embryo, I suddenly realized there was such a small difference between it and my daughters...I thought, we can’t keep destroying embryos for our research. There must be another way.”¹⁹ iPSCs have since been used in disease modeling, regenerative therapy, and drug discovery, with early results showing success in each area, including restoring movement for paralyzed patients.^{20,21}

While destruction of human embryos has enriched some researchers, it has not yielded benefits to patients. Meanwhile, ethical alternatives are providing treatments for millions of patients. Therefore, we believe it is in the best interest of both taxpayers and patients to stop spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars each year on hESC research. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Roger Wicker
United States Senator



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



Cindy Hyde-Smith
Member of Congress



Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

¹⁵ National Marrow Donor Program. “The Cord Blood Donation Process and FAQs.” Accessed February 26, 2025. <https://www.nmdp.org/get-involved/join-the-registry/donate-cord-blood/cord-blood-donation-process>

¹⁶ Stem Cell Connect. <https://stemcellresearchfacts.org/>

¹⁷ Tarne, Eugene. “Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research 25 Years On.” Charlotte Lozier Institute *On Science Series* 15, October 2023. <https://lozierinstitute.org/human-embryonic-stem-cell-research-25-years-on/>

¹⁸ The Nobel Prize. “Shinya Yamanaka: Facts.” <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/2012/yamanaka/facts/>

¹⁹ Fackler, Martin. “Risk Taking Is in His Genes.” New York Times. December 11, 2007. <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/11/science/11prof.html?pagewanted=print>

²⁰ Sayed, Nazish, MD, PhD and Joseph C Wu, MD, PhD. “Translation of Human-Induced Pluripotent Stem Cells: From Clinical Trial in a Dish to Precision Medicine.” *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* 67, 2161-2176, 2016. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0735109716010263>

²¹ Mallapaty, Smriti, “Paralysed man stands again after receiving ‘reprogrammed’ stem cells.” *Nature News* 24 March 2025, <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-00863-0>



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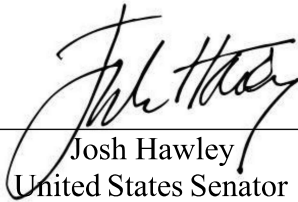
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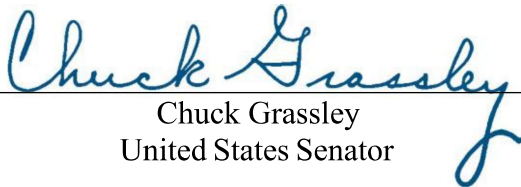
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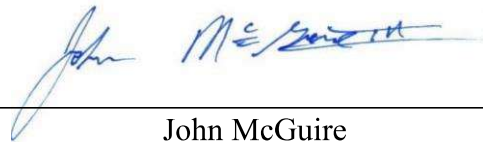
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