

Nancy Johnson



Fifth District, Connecticut

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Contact: Brian Schubert
(202) 225-4476

Johnson Urges President to Sign Stem Cell Bill

Advance Potentially Life-Saving Research, Congresswoman Says

NEW BRITAIN, CT – Congresswoman Nancy Johnson today urged President Bush to sign historic legislation advancing stem cell research into law when it reaches his desk, extending hope to millions of American families suffering from the most deadly diseases of our time.

A longtime stem cell research advocate, Johnson was instrumental in bringing the "Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act" to a vote on the U.S. House floor, where it passed on May 24. The U.S. Senate is expected to pass the bill later this summer, but President George W. Bush has said he will veto it. Today, Johnson sent a letter to President Bush urging him to sign this important legislation into law.

"Mr. President, I urge you to reconsider your opposition to this very narrow expansion of your stem cell research policy and sign the bill into law after the Senate passes it this summer. Embryonic stem cell research and other types of stem cell research are simply too promising to let another year go by without taking action to support this potentially life-saving work. Instead, we should give hope to millions of American families and open the door to new medical discoveries and breakthroughs by supporting ethical, groundbreaking stem cell research," Johnson wrote.

Congresswoman Johnson's letter to the President follows.

July 5, 2005

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

On May 24, the U.S. House passed historic legislation advancing embryonic stem cell research, extending hope to millions of American families suffering from the most deadly diseases of our time. I am confident the Senate will pass the bill in the near future, and I am

Johnson letter to President Bush/2

writing today to urge you to sign this important legislation into law when it reaches your desk.

In announcing the Administration's present policy restricting federal support for embryonic stem cell research in 2001, you said that "scientists believe further research using stem cells offers great promise that could help improve the lives of those who suffer from many terrible diseases -- from juvenile diabetes to Alzheimer's, from Parkinson's to spinal cord injuries," adding that embryonic stem cells have "unique potential." What you said in 2001 is more true today.

Unfortunately, those same scientists now believe the Administration's stem cell research policy has hit a dead-end. Increased federal support for embryonic stem cell research is needed, not only to bring us closer to treatments and cures but also to expand the frontiers of medical knowledge.

This spring, I was one of five Republicans in the Congress who informed House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert that we would not support passage of the federal budget unless stem cell research legislation was brought to the floor for a vote. Last month, Republicans and Democrats joined together to pass this bipartisan bill. It allows federally funded research on new stem cells derived from surplus embryos created for use in fertility treatment that would otherwise be discarded. Individuals who donate the embryos for research must provide informed, written consent and cannot be compensated in any way. Certainly, these embryos can fulfill a more sacred and compassionate purpose through life-saving research than through their wanton disposal.

Mr. President, I urge you to reconsider your opposition to this very narrow expansion of your stem cell research policy and sign the bill into law after the Senate passes it this summer. Embryonic stem cell research and other types of stem cell research are simply too promising to let another year go by without taking action to support this potentially life-saving work. Instead, we should give hope to millions of American families and open the door to new medical discoveries and breakthroughs by supporting ethical, groundbreaking stem cell research.

Very truly yours,

/s/

Nancy L. Johnson
Member of Congress

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