

Dallas Erickson Testimony
SJ 18 - Embryonic Stem Cell Research
House Human Services Committee
March 30, 2005

EXHIBIT 9
DATE 3-30-05
SJ 18

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Dallas Erickson and I represent Montana Family Coalition and we oppose this bill because it is a death bill not a life bill.

Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa likened embryonic stem cells to the period at the end of a sentence. Actress Mary Tyler Moore referred to them as little more than goldfish. And in the name of science, some want to destroy them for research, even though perfectly good - more promising, sources of human stem cells exist without destroying anything.

Human embryos. Some say people "come from" them. In fact, you were once the small cluster of human cells that make up a human embryo. Even at that time, though, each of us had his or her own distinctive genetic blueprint, never to be changed.

There exists a surplus of tiny human embryos in cold storage, left there until the mothers and fathers can decide what to do with them. The surplus is a result of infertile couples resorting to in vitro fertilization of sperm and egg in an effort to induce a successful pregnancy - a test tube baby, if you will. Doctors, hoping for success, harvest and fertilize more eggs than necessary.

Some want to use these as an endless source of stem cells for medical research. Others see them as valuable members of the human race awaiting a home of their own. An adoption agency has been set up so people can adopt and protect these little potential humans so someday they can reach their full capacity as you have been allowed to.

It goes without saying that the embryos used for research have not given their consent to serve as donors. One basic moral assumption in the Judeo-Christian world-view is that human beings are to be regarded as ends, not employed as means. Creating people for the purpose of serving as organ and tissue banks — even in a limited capacity, even in tragic circumstances — lays a predicate for a whole new variety of slavery.

Please vote against this bill. It certainly does not represent the will of a majority of Montanans.

Thank you.

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