

To the Committee Secretary,

I would like to submit my support for the basis of Recommendation 1 in the Australian Health Ethics Committee (AHEC) Report on the Scientific, Ethical and Regulatory Considerations Relevant to Cloning of Human Beings, as submitted to the Hon Dr Michael Wooldridge on 16 December 1998. I strongly believe that activities such as the reproductive cloning of human beings, experimentation with the intent to produce individuals with specific traits or being genetically identical etc should not be permitted.

In fact, words alone cannot adequately express the strength of that belief. To me, it is fundamental to my understanding of life, as fundamental as breathing! I must admit to some dismay that there is even seen to be a need to legislate for this - however, I acknowledge that throughout the ages there have always been some people whose regard for the lives of others is based on their ability to manipulate. This is not an outright criticism of Recommendation 2 of the Report - however, I do urge careful, simple and encompassing wording for any legislation drafted because it is part of human nature to look for the loopholes, test the boundaries etc!

"For example, the wording should clearly and succinctly ban any activity that even hints at social engineering (eg choosing a baby's sex and/or specific genetic traits)."

With reference to the reporting system currently in place, as referred to in Resolution 1, on IEC research approvals of projects involving the application of current cloning techniques to human embryos (and acknowledging that I am unaware of the basis for that report), I would suggest that the proposed legislation also require any 'private' research being conducted on human cloning to be included in such a report.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on such an important issue.

Yours sincerely,

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