

The Secretary,  
Senate Community Affairs Committee  
Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600

## **Submission AGAINST Human Cloning.**

I direct my comments to the Members of the Senate Community Affairs Committee Inquiry into the Legislative responses to Recommendations of the Lockhart Review, in reference to:

- The reports of the Legislation Review Committee on the *Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002* and the *Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002* (the Lockhart review).
- Senator Patterson's Prohibition of Human Cloning for Reproduction and the Regulation of Human Embryo Research Amendment Bill 2006
- Senators Stott Despoja and Webber's Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT) and Related Research Amendment Bill 2006

**I ask that the Committee uphold the prohibition on all forms of human cloning for the following reasons:**

**1. In 2002 Australian Parliamentarians agreed that the production of cloned human embryos was prohibited.** Cloned human embryos would be living human beings and it would be unethical to create them for the purposes of research, training, drug testing, stem cell donation, organ donation, ovum donation or any other therapeutic endeavour, no matter what potential benefit might possibly be derived for others by their death. This still applies in 2006.

**2. The process of obtaining material for cloning involves unacceptable processes.** Hundreds of ova must be obtained from women (with risk of severe side effects and even death), from animals (thus creating human-animal chimeras) or from aborted girl fetuses (so the aborted girl foetus becomes the mother of another human being also destined to be deprived of human rights). This still applies in 2006.

**3. Cloning is not required to find cures for diseases.** Adult stem cells from umbilical cord blood, human nose or bone marrow are already saving lives, are being used in research and therapy in scores of diseases including Parkinson's Disease and Heart disease. Embryonic stem cells from aborted fetuses have not successfully been employed to treat any illnesses and because of tumor formation and immune system rejection have killed people. This still applies in 2006.

4. **Doctors who engage in cloning are in violation of the World Medical Association's May 2006 Declaration of Geneva adopted by the Australian Medical Association in September 2006.** The Declaration, (available in full at [www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6U362Q](http://www.ama.com.au/web.nsf/doc/WEEN-6U362Q)) includes:

- The **health** of my patient will be my first consideration
- I will not permit considerations of **age, disease or disability**, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, **social standing** or any other factor to intervene between my duty and my patient.
- I will maintain the utmost **respect for human life**
- I will **not use my medical knowledge to violate human rights and civil liberties**, even under threat

The bold type is mine. The creation of cloned human embryos for the purposes of drug testing, organ transplants, extraction of stem cells for cosmetic surgery or other research would clearly violate the health of those human beings. Cloning of humans would clearly create a sub-class of human beings without parents, human rights, civil liberties or opportunity to live despite disease or disability. It can not be argued that cloned embryos are not patients without denying their humanity and denying the principles and values of the medical profession.

5. **The Australian biotechnology and medical industries should be supported to develop world-class research utilizing different forms of Adult stem cells.** This was evident in 2002 and still applies in 2006.

6. **Australians should be free to utilize pharmaceuticals, transplant organs, vaccines or stem cell therapies that have not been based on the intentional destruction of living human beings.** This was evident in 2002 and still applies in 2006.

7. Senator Patterson is on record as stating in 2002 that she was opposed to human cloning:

**'I believe strongly that it is wrong to create human embryos solely for research'**,

**'It is not morally permissible to develop an embryo with the intent of truncating it at an early stage for the benefit of another human being'**

**There would be no slippery slope because 'the Prohibition of Human Cloning Bill 2002 bans the creation of a human embryo for a purpose other than achieving a pregnancy'**

**therefore 'it is disingenuous to suggest that approving this research will open the door to further killing of living human beings'.**

In 2006 without there having been any change in the basic science or ethics of human cloning Senator Patterson proposes a Bill permitting the creation of human embryos solely for research, for the immoral gain of other humans, and having the result of taking the Australian people down a slippery slope of condoning the killing of living human beings. Senator Patterson spoke the truth in 2002 when she spoke of "killing human beings". This still applies in 2006.

8. Senators Stott Despoja and Webber's Bill focuses on somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT). **The term SCNT was proposed by the International Society for Stem Cell Research to obfuscate the humanity of cloned human embryos.** In 2002 it was known that cloned human embryos, produced by SCNT, were living human beings. This still applies in 2006.

9. Senators Stott Despoja and Webber's Bill also recommends the use of animal eggs to combine with human material to create animal-human hybrid embryos. In doing so, Senator Stott Despoja has ignored the specific scientific advice of **Australia's Chief Scientist, Jim Peacock, who says that the use of animal eggs as part of therapeutic cloning should be banned.** Senator Stott Despoja herself had serious concerns about this process when she spoke at the Second Australian Stem Cell Centre Annual Scientific Conference in 2004. She said, **"This is a radical agenda, unsupported by proof of principle research"**. This still applies in 2006.

10 An even more radical agenda is one proposed by an eminent medical ethicist, Professor Julian Savulescu, previously of Melbourne, now at Oxford University. In his article **"Should we clone human beings? Cloning as a source of tissue for transplantation"** he stated:

"The most justified use of human cloning is arguably to produce stem cells for the treatment of disease. I have argued that it is not only reasonable to produce embryos as a source of multipotent stem cells, but that **it is morally required to produce embryos and early fetuses as a source of tissue for transplantation.**" (*Journal of Medical Ethics* 25.2 (April 1999): p87)

**Professor Savulescu's attitude would take us down Senator Patterson's slippery slope and into a moral abyss. This should be avoided at all costs.**

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to uphold the 2002  
Prohibition on Human Cloning

Yours sincerely

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