

Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee

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Embryonic stem cell research and cloning

I am a concerned Australian citizen, and I appeal to this committee to carefully consider the matter at hand, as it legalizes the mix of human and animal genetic material in the same embryo. This presents an ethical problem in that it involves crossing a cultural and moral barrier between human and animal reproduction. Experiments such as this could have long ranging consequences and are not acceptable to myself. Many fellow Australians have expressed similar views to me on this subject.

I understand that the Senate Community Affairs Committee is to investigate the recommendations of the Lockhart Committee regarding cloning - the creation of embryos to be destroyed for research. The practice of using animal eggs for cloning because of the lack of human eggs for experimentation is not only wrong, but the fact that it creates life only to destroy it, is unlawful in Australia. The Lockhart inquiry shows the error of appointing a committee on the basis that they support a technology, rather than on the basis of representation of community interests.

Also those who are supporting a cloning bill are ignoring the specific scientific advice of the national chief scientist, Jim Peacock, who says that the use of animal eggs as part of therapeutic cloning should be banned. Those who support this kind of bill have a radical agenda, unsupported by proof of principle research. When the topic is so sensitive, there should be plenty of evidence to support going down this path. This evidence does not exist, and in fact it exists to the contrary, so I urge this committee to be diligent in their research of this subject as it is not one to be taken lightly.

I trust you understand the seriousness with which I view this kind of research. Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,,
Cheryl Harrold,