

27 September 2006

The Secretary
State Community Affairs Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir / Madame,

Re: Human Cloning

I would like to express my opposition to the legalisation of cloning to create human embryos. I believe this is wrong whether it be for therapeutic, research or reproductive purposes, as was the unanimous decision of all Australian MPs in 2002.

To my knowledge there has been no evidence to show that embryonic stem cells are likely to provide cures for diseases. In fact, to the contrary, they have been shown to be unstable and form tumours, whereas adult stem cells have already proved effective in the treatment of several conditions. Adult cells do not form tumours and they are more readily produced without the creation and destruction of human life.

I find it hard to believe that the Lockhart Committee even recommended the use of animal eggs in the formation of cloned embryos, thus producing a human-animal hybrid, as an alternative to harvesting the hundreds of eggs required from women. How far we have come in our hunger for scientific research and discovery in just four years! What will the recommendations be if there is another review in four years time?

Cloning for research purposes will only pave the way for live birth cloning or for foetal organ harvesting which is already being considered overseas. Our leaders in this nation need to take a stand now to protect the value of human life, making a responsible decision to encourage further research into the promising area of adult stem cell research, and maintaining the ban on human embryo cloning for any purposes.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ruth Nicholls