

29 September 2006

**Submission to Australian Senate Community Affairs Committee on  
Legislative responses to recommendations of the Lockhart Review**

I am opposed to the legislative responses to recommendations of the Reports of the Legislation Review Committee on the *Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002* and *Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002* (the Lockhart review).

The intent of the legislative responses to recommendations of the Lockhart Review is, *inter alia*, to remove the prohibitions against the production of human embryos by cloning and against the creation of human embryos, by any means, for use for research purposes.

I hold the conviction that developing human life is present from the very start of the existence of a human embryo and I believe that human life should be treated with reverence and respect. Consequently, I oppose the proposed changes to the current definition of human embryo that would define a human embryo as commencing at a later point in time, e.g., after the first cell division.

Clearly then, I am strongly opposed to any legislation that would allow human embryos to be produced by cloning and used for research purposes. If legislation were approved that permitted the creation of embryos for destructive purposes, our society would have agreed to the idea that a human being may be made specifically for the purposes of another. This is totally against the dignity owed to each human being.

I understand that the combined effect of the two Acts, *Prohibition of Human Cloning Act 2002* and *Research Involving Human Embryos Act 2002*, is, *inter alia*, to:

- prohibit human cloning and several other practices considered unacceptable
- prohibit the creation of human embryos, by any means, for any purpose other than for attempting to achieve a pregnancy in a woman

I consider that these prohibitions are still relevant and that they must be maintained, not weakened. Further, it is my strong preference that the legislation should be amended to prohibit also the presently allowed uses of excess human embryos created through ART.

It seems that much of the support for the destructive use of human embryos comes from the belief that embryonic stem cells can be used to lead to cures for diseases. However, my reading indicates that the use of adult stem cells for this purpose is clearly succeeding – there are many documented successes. I am not aware of any such successes arising from the use of embryonic stem cells. Independently of any consideration of ethical issues, it is therefore completely unnecessary to create human embryos to experiment on and destroy them.

Yours sincerely

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