



October 4 2006

Community Affairs Committee
Australian Senate

By Email: Community.affairs@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

Re: Legislative responses to the recommendations of the Lockhart review

Bio21 Australia Ltd is a Company comprising seventeen member research institutions, (www.bio21.com.au). The response below reflects the views of Bio21 Australia member organisations, with the exception of St. Vincent's Health and St. Vincent's Institute who will make a separate submission via The Caroline Chisholm Centre for Health Ethics; the ethics department of all Catholic Hospitals in Victoria.

Bio21 Australia Ltd supports the introduction of new legislation as provided for in the two private members bills recently introduced to the Senate which encompass the recommendations of the Lockhart Review 2005. Bio21 Australia Ltd believes that the recommendations of the Lockhart Review provide a considered middle ground that would allow Australia to remain at the forefront of biomedical research in an area that can now produce new information on early embryonic development and may provide significant new treatments in the future, whilst prohibiting activities that would be unacceptable to most Australians. The proposals to expand the allowable research involving human embryos as recommended in the Lockhart Review come with very stringent licensing and reporting procedures to ensure that the processes are closely monitored.

Australia needs to take care that legislation protects its citizens and maintains high ethical and moral standards but that this occurs in the light of informed scientific debate and does not result in an over-reaction due to lack of understanding of the complex scientific issues involved. Otherwise we run the risk of failing to participate in biomedical research discoveries that could ultimately save many lives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stella Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Stella Clark PhD
CEO
Bio21 Australia Ltd