

Obama to broaden stem cell research

by UPI

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Obama's expected lifting of embryonic stem cell research money limits Monday also should help keep scientific work apolitical, officials said.

The presidential memorandum will order the Office of Science and Technology Policy to "assure a number of effective standards and practices that will help our society feel that we have the highest quality individuals carrying out scientific jobs and that information is shared with the public," Harold Varmus, co-chair of Obama's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology, told The Washington Post. (NYSE:WPO)

The executive order will overturn a restriction former President George Bush enacted that limited federal funding to 21 cell lines already in existence when he signed the order.

Some scientists believe embryonic stem cells could provide tissue to replace defective organs or cells because embryonic stem cells can morph into any type of cell present in the body.

The press schedule for Monday indicated Obama "will deliver remarks on the importance of maintaining scientific integrity in health research before signing an executive order on stem cells and a presidential memorandum on scientific integrity in the East Room."

Obama does not intend to call for the repeal of the Dickey-Wicker amendment, which bars the use of federal

funds to conduct research on embryos directly, aides said.

One Republican lawmaker, Rep. Christopher Smith of New Jersey, is planning his own event Monday to protest Obama's stem cell policy, The New York Times (NYSE:NYT) reported

Smith said he did not think lawmakers would overturn the embryo research funding ban.

"I don't think it will fly because the movement in the country is in favor of life," he said.

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