

California rock star sways Iowa cloning vote

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Iowa Introduces New Crop: Human Embryos

CHELSEA, Mich. - The national Catholic based advocacy group Fidelis condemned the 52-46 vote by the Iowa House of Representatives in favor of a bill that lifts a four-year-old ban on human cloning. The approved legislation legalizes embryonic cloning and killing for stem cell research. The bill now awaits the signature of Governor Chet Culver, who actively lobbied for its passage.

Fidelis President Joseph Cella stated: "The most outrageous incident surrounding the debate over this legislation involved State Representative Brian Quirk (D-New Hampton), who is Catholic and a member of the Knights of Columbus. Representative Quirk changed his vote under tremendous pressure, which included a call from rock star Sheryl Crow who called him on his cell phone the evening before the final vote to urge him to vote 'yes' on the legislation.

"Crow has been a champion of abortion rights, performing at 'Rock for Choice' concerts and is a strong supporter of Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider. She is the last person Iowans, particularly a Catholic legislator who claims to be pro-life, should look to when it comes to protecting human life," Cella said.

The bill, SF 162, titled the 'Iowa Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative,' is a deceptive proposal that would repeal the current state law banning human cloning in order to allow "somatic cell nuclear transfer" techniques, a form of embryonic cloning, that could be used for embryonic stem cell research.

"Thursday's vote was a shameful and cowardly flip flop on the part of the Iowa legislature. Four years ago, the legislature made human cloning a felony to protect their state, but now they believe it is perfectly fine to clone and destroy human embryos for research that many skeptics believe will not lead to a single cure."

Were it not for Representative Quirk's vote, the bill would not have received enough votes needed to advance to the Governor for his signature. The Iowa Constitution requires that in order for a bill to become law, 51 votes or more are needed. Representative Betty DeBoef (R-Keokuk) inadvertently cast an "aye" vote and explained in the House Journal she intended to vote "nay."

Cella said: "These legislators deceived the people of Iowa by telling them that the current proposal would not involve human cloning, simply because the process did not involve the use of sperm. In fact, the legislation explicitly authorizes the use of scientific techniques that involve the cloning of human embryos for research purposes."

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