

White House: Bush to veto stem cell bill

by UPI

WASHINGTON - White House sources said U.S. President George Bush will veto a bill on federal funds for embryonic stem cell research but will authorize alternative research.

Two senior administration officials told The New York Times on Tuesday that Bush is adamant that destruction of embryos for stem cell retrieval and research is a moral line he will not cross.

The measure was a priority for Democrats when they took over control of the U.S. Congress this year but they don't have the votes to override bush's promised veto.

Bush is also to issue an executive order that would require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish guidelines, within the next three months, for funding alternative approaches to the research.

In August 2001, Bush said he would allow federal taxpayers to finance the research but only on stem cell colonies or lines that already existed. He forbade harvesting any new cells.

Proponents of the research say Bush's moral stand is unjustified, as the embryos from which stem cells are derived are slated for destruction regardless of whether they are used in research, The Washington Post reported.

Stem cell research paid for by state or private funds wouldn't be affected by the veto.

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