

Bishops defend inter-species embryos

by UPI

LONDON - Roman Catholic bishops have told Britain's parliament considering human-animal hybrid embryos that they have the same rights as human embryos.

The statement was part of a submission to the joint committee scrutinizing draft overhaul legislation of the Human Tissue and Embryo Bill, which regulates abortion, test tube babies and embryo research, The Telegraph reported Tuesday.

As the draft stands, the creation of animal-human embryos created by injecting animal cells or DNA into human embryos or human cells into animal eggs would not allow for the implantation into a woman's womb.

But the bishops said such "chimeras," named after a mythical half-man, half-animal, "with a preponderance of human genes should be assumed to be embryonic human beings, and should be treated accordingly."

The bishops said while they opposed the creation of any embryo solely for research, they were also anxious to limit the destruction of such life once it had been created, the report said.

Parliament is scheduled to take up debate on the bill later this year.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Bishops defend inter-species embryos by UPI