



A PATIENT-CENTERED FORUM OF NATIONAL ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS ADDRESSING PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES IN CANCER

May 20, 2005

The Honorable Michael Castle
U.S. House of Representatives
1233 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Diana L. DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
1527 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Castle and DeGette:

The undersigned organizations dedicated to advocacy for people with cancer write to endorse H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. Although the research agenda is still in its early phases, it is increasingly clear that embryonic stem cells offer tremendous potential to address human suffering from a wide range of diseases, including cancer.

The Administration has already recognized the theoretical advantages of stem cell research by permitting federal funds to be used in research involving the limited number of stem cell lines in existence at the time of that decision. Subsequently, however, these existing stem cell lines have proven to be insufficient to explore effectively the use of the technology in cancer and other serious and life-threatening diseases. Federal policy governing embryonic stem cell research needs to be modified to reflect advances in scientific knowledge and the development of new stem cell lines. The Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act will allow the use of additional stem cell lines and appropriate expansion of the scope of stem cell research.

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H.R. 810 represents an incremental, but important, step toward wider federal support of embryonic stem cell research, and we commend you for pressing this important initiative at this time of increasing promise for stem cell technology.

Sincerely,

Cancer Leadership Council

American Psychosocial Oncology Society
American Society of Clinical Oncology
Association of American Cancer Institutes
Cancer Care, Inc.
Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation
The Children's Cause for Cancer Advocacy
Coalition of National Cancer Cooperative
Groups
Fertile Hope
International Myeloma Foundation

Kidney Cancer Association
The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Lymphoma Research Foundation
Marti Nelson Cancer Foundation
National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship
National Prostate Cancer Coalition
North American Brain Tumor Coalition
Ovarian Cancer National Alliance
Sarcoma Foundation of America
Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization