



News From
DAVE WELDON

Florida's 15th District -- *Serving Brevard, Indian River, Osceola, and Polk Counties*

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**REP. DAVE WELDON, M.D. DENOUNCES
SENATE CONSIDERATION OF A CLONING "MORATORIUM"**

Washington, DC -- Representative Dave Weldon, M.D., a former Army Medical Corps physician and practicing internist, released the following statement regarding the possible consideration of a two-year cloning moratorium in the U.S. Senate. Dr. Weldon, who has a background of experience in molecular genetics research authored the human cloning ban that passed through the House of Representatives last year with a large bi-partisan margin.

"Let me be clear, any 'moratorium' on human cloning for scientific research is an unacceptable outcome on this all-important subject. A moratorium implies that 'cloning is immoral today, but perhaps two years from now it will be moral.' This is dangerous thinking. It amounts to a green light to those handful of biotech corporations who want to engage in the practice of creating human embryos specifically for experimental research, and provides a copout for a handful of Senators who don't want to tell biotech lobbyists 'No', but are unwilling to vote with the convictions of nearly 80% of their constituents.

"Senator Daschle is using every tool at his disposal to disrupt a straight up or down vote to ban human cloning. First we were told there would be a vote to ban human cloning in November, then February, then April, then May, now he's telling us June. His goal is to defeat outright the ban on human cloning while providing political cover for Democrat Senators like Tim Johnson and Jean Carnahan who face the voters this Fall, and to ultimately kill a ban on human cloning in a House-Senate conference.

"A moratorium vote allows Senators—who have been working behind the scenes to kill the ban on human cloning—to tell their constituents they voted against human cloning, while telling biotech lobbyists that they helped kill the ban on human cloning. A moratorium is nothing more than the first step in allowing human cloning in the U.S. Webster's defines moratorium as 'a legally authorized period of delay in the performance of a legal obligation.' We are delaying and shirking our duties with this moratorium. I would prefer to see a straight up or down vote on this ban and let the American people decide how well their Senators represented their values on this matter.

"The White House, today, reiterated their strong support for a total ban. In a press conference today, Ari Fleischer, when asked if the President would welcome a two-year moratorium as an alternative to a full ban, said: 'The President supports the Senate doing what the House easily did in a bipartisan way.' That is, a complete ban with no moratorium. By definition a moratorium says you can begin experimental human cloning after the moratorium expires.

"Let's also be clear about what's at stake here: whether to draw a *clear* ethical line that says cloning humans for experimental research and then killing them is unacceptable behavior for a civilized nation. A moratorium is an empty gesture in answering that question," concluded Weldon.

For more information or to schedule an interview with Rep. Weldon, please call Pamela Groover at 202-225-3671.

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