



For Immediate Release
December 21, 2005

Rep. Pitts Champions End of Year Pro-Family Legislation

*Congressman Plays Leading Role on Separate Legislation Dealing with
Ethical Stem Cell Research, Gulf Coast Rebuilding*

Washington— Congressman Joe Pitts (R, PA-16) today praised the passage of two pro-family bills he championed on Capitol Hill during Congress' final days of legislative business for the year. Last week, Congress passed both the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005 (H.R. 4440) and the Stem Cell Therapeutic Research Act of 2005 (H.R. 2520). Congressman Pitts played a leading role in the passage of both of these bills in the House of Representatives.

The Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005 (H.R. 4440) encourages a speedy recovery process along the Gulf Coast by providing tax breaks to legitimate businesses devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Congressman Pitts led the effort to make sure businesses capitalizing on objectionable behavior, including casinos, massage parlors, and liquor stores, will not receive taxpayer subsidies for rebuilding as part of this legislation.

The Stem Cell Therapeutic Research Act of 2005 (H.R. 2520), provides funding for the creation of a national databank of umbilical cord blood rich in adult stem cells. These adult stem cells, taken from discarded umbilical cords and placentas, are already treating thousands of patients with nearly 70 diseases, from Leukemia to Sickle Cell Anemia. President Bush signed this important legislation into law yesterday afternoon.

“In the rush to wrap up legislation for the year, I was glad to see Congress commit itself to these common sense pro-family initiatives,” said Congressman Pitts. **“Recognizing that it is only ethical adult stem cell research that is producing treatments and cures, not embryonic stem cell research involving the destruction of human embryos, Congress did the right thing and gave Americans greater access to the lifesaving stem cells found in umbilical cord blood. This legislation allows doctors to turn medical waste into modern day medical miracles.”**

“In addressing the rebuilding of our Gulf Coast, Congress struck the right balance by providing investment incentives for legitimate business in devastated areas, while making sure to avoid government’s involvement in the reconstruction of businesses that contribute to the erosion of communities.”