



*News From*  
**DAVE WELDON**

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

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WELDON STATEMENT ON STEM CELL DEBATE

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Dave Weldon, M.D. (FL-15) released the following statement today.

“Senator Kerry has decided this week to put reasonable debate aside and put political dogma into full swing. Dogma regarding stem cell research that is full of errors, misleading hype, and reduces important ethical choices to mere sound bites.

“At the heart of this debate is not whether “ideology” stands in the way of medical progress, but whether medical progress should be informed by any ethical norms at all. Senator Kerry and others like him have absorbed the idea that science is truth, that science is the final arbiter. It is not. Should we let that happen, we will have turned an ugly corner in our humanity.

“This debate is over whether science will continue to serve humanity or whether humanity will be become guinea pigs for science. Just because we can do something doesn’t mean we should. Most people instinctively know that there is a link between material order and moral order. Sever that connection, and we seer our conscience. Perhaps Senator Kerry is comfortable doing that, but I am not prepared to foist that same disregard on the nation.

“The American public has been told that there is “a ban on stem cell research.” There is none. Embryo stem cell research in this country is legal and unrestricted. The current debate is over whether taxpayers should be forced to pay for research that many view as unethical.

“Americans have also been told that treatments with embryo stem cells “are

right at our fingertips.” They are not. These are deliberate falsehoods used merely for political gain. This kind of rhetoric can create false hopes for many sick and suffering people. Doing this to get votes is despicable.

“Despite what Senator Kerry would have us believe, research on embryo stem cells has revealed that they have inherent biological problems that make treatments for human disease unlikely in the next decade or beyond. Indeed, James Thomson, who discovered human embryo stem cells in 1998, claims “that transplantation of differentiated human ES cell derivatives into human recipients may result in the formation of ES cell-derived tumors.”

“It’s time for politicians to stop cruelly raising the hopes of millions of Americans with the unsubstantiated promise of embryonic stem cell research. Instead, we should focus on using sound, ethical research on adult stem cells and umbilical cord blood cells to get real cures to patients as quickly as possible,” said Rep. Dave Weldon.

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