

July 17, 2006

The Honorable «First_Name» «Last_Name»
United States Senate
«Address_Line_1» Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator «Last_Name»:

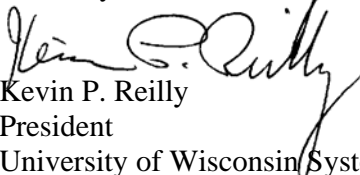
On behalf of the University of Wisconsin System, we are writing to urge you to vote “yes” on H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. This legislation would broaden the current federal policy on human embryonic stem cell research to authorize federally funded research on cell lines derived from embryos developed for in-vitro fertilization (IVF) that otherwise would be discarded.


As you know, using donated, surplus embryos produced by in vitro fertilization, a group of UW-Madison developmental biologists, led by James Thomson, established five independent stem cell lines in November 1998. This was the first time human embryonic stem cells had been successfully isolated and cultured. This discovery brought hope to millions of people who believe that stem cells may unlock treatments or cures for life’s most debilitating diseases.

The UW-Madison campus is the world leader in this embryonic stem cell research. Currently there are 80 scientists engaged in stem cell work on the campus. The patents that govern the technology and use of existing stem cell lines are held by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), and WARF has distributed cells to over 300 research groups around the world, as well as trained over 350 scientists as to how to work with this new technology. The National Institute’s of Health chose WiCell Research Institute as the one and only National Stem Cell Bank, which distributes embryonic stem cell lines available for use in federally funded research programs.

The University of Wisconsin System would appreciate your support of these efforts. This research has kept the United States as a leader in this technology which shows promise to treat and cure some very serious diseases, and provides opportunities for high-wage jobs for American citizens. Please vote in favor of H.R. 810 to advance stem cell research.

Sincerely,


Kevin P. Reilly
President
University of Wisconsin System


Carl E. Gulbrandsen
Managing Director
Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation

cc: UW Board of Regents
Chancellors
Cabinet