



July 2008

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Signing Ceremony for LB 606, Ban on Creating & Destroying Human Embryos

Governor Dave Heineman signed LB 606 into law in April with pro-life senators and lobbyists present. Not pictured are two key senators, Senator Steve Lathrop of Omaha, inserted left, and Speaker Mike Flood of Norfolk, inserted right. Senator Lathrop spent many hours with pro-life lobbyists crafting language and negotiating. Senator Flood was instrumental in keeping pro-life lobbyists apprised of new developments and fostering lines of communication. Nebraska Right to Life has worked to enact a ban on unethical medical research since 2000. LB 606 represents a good faith effort to prevent UNMC or any other publicly funded entity from pursuing human cloning.

LB 606: Human Cloning and Embryo Destruction Ban

**Synopsis by Dave Bydalek, JD,
 Executive Director
 Family First, Lincoln**

LB 606 constitutes a compromise on the issue of human cloning. It is the result of several weeks of negotiations between pro-life groups, the University of Nebraska, members of the Judiciary Committee, Senator Christensen,

and Speaker Flood. It is entitled the Stem Cell Research Act.

Below is a breakdown of the key provisions of the bill:

Section 2: This section includes key definitions of language used in the bill.

- Human embryo is defined as a developing human organism from the time of fertilization until the eighth week of development.
- The definition also includes an embryo created by somatic cell nuclear transfer – a term of art which refers to human cloning.
- Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer refers to the process of transferring the nucleus from a human body cell (i.e. somatic cell) into a human egg cell which has had its chromosomes removed or inactivated.

Section 3: Section 3 creates the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee (hereinafter the Committee). The Committee will consist of the deans of the accredited

medical schools in Nebraska (UNMC and Creighton). Additional members will be chosen as follows:

- Each dean will nominate three scientists from outside of Nebraska who perform NIH funded human stem cell research.
- Nebraska's Chief Medical Officer (currently Dr. Joann Schaefer) will select two of the scientists from each set of nominations (a total of four) to serve on the Committee.
- These appointments will serve three-year terms. Prior to serving, the appointments must be approved by the Legislature.
- The Committee must meet not less than twice per year.

Section 4: Section 4 empowers the Committee to establish a grant process to award grants to Nebraska institutions/researchers to conduct nonembryonic stem cell research. The Committee must:

Continued on Page 2

In Summary, LB 606:

- Prohibits the use of public funds/facilities for destroying existing embryos or creating cloned embryos.
- Establishes the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee and authorizes the Committee to provide grants (via the newly created Stem Cell Research Cash Fund) for nonembryonic stem cell research.
- Does not prohibit embryonic stem cell research on stem cell lines currently available for research via the NIH.
- Is silent as to human cloning in privately funded labs.

Legislature Passes Human Cloning and Embryo Destruction Ban

Continued from Page 1

- Annually report to the Legislature the number of grants awarded and the researchers/institutions to which the grants were awarded.
- Report to the Legislature no more than three years after the effective date of the Act on the progress of any projects funded via the grant process.

Section 5: Section 5 creates the Stem Cell Research Cash Fund. Money credited to the fund will be used to match, up to \$500,000 per fiscal year, non-state funds received by Nebraska researchers/institutions to conduct non-embryonic stem cell research.

Section 6: Section 6 constitutes a public ban on human cloning. Specifically, section 5:

- Prohibits the use of state funds/facilities to 1) destroy existing human embryos for the purpose of research; 2) create human embryos by somatic cell nuclear transfer (i.e. cloning). In other words, LB 606 prohibits the destruction of leftover embryos created via in vitro fertilization, as well as the creation of embryos via cloning.

Section 7: This section authorizes the transfer of \$500,000 every year from the Nebraska Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund to the Stem Cell Research Cash Fund.

Section 9: Section 9 is an emergency clause.

Dedication Leads to Gabriel's Corner

A miraculous series of events resulted in the opening of Gabriel's Corner Crisis Pregnancy Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 2006. It was shortly after Planned Parenthood of Nebraska/Council Bluffs opened its abortion facility that a group of dedicated pro-lifers came together and prayed for God's provision to assist them in the task of offering alternatives to women and young girls facing unplanned pregnancies.

A Bellevue, Neb., couple, Jean and Kathy Plourde, had gone by the site of

the PP facility and noticed a "For Sale" sign down in the weeds of a vacant lot across 16th Street from PP. The Plourde's set about purchasing the lot and formed a 501-c-3 entity with other pro-lifers to raise funds for a new modular home to be moved to the site. This was done after committing the project to prayer, according to Executive Director Christine Wilson.

Thus was the birth of Gabriel's Corner CPC. The CPC was further blessed with a donor who bought a new 4-D Ultrasound machine and several nurses who came forward to volunteer their time to do ultrasounds for CPC clients.

Volunteers man Monday through Saturday hours at the CPC which also

boasts a wonderful room of new baby items which are given to mothers. The building also has a large meeting room to host educational events and separate counseling and rest room facilities. Landscaping and flowers have been lovingly donated by two families. The property stands out in stark contrast to the PP facility across the street.

Planned Parenthood Medical Malpractice Lawsuit Settled Out of Court

In May, the medical malpractice lawsuit brought by a woman against Planned Parenthood of Nebraska/Council Bluffs and abortionist Meryl Severson, was settled out of court.

The woman had to undergo an emergency hysterectomy in the summer of 2007 following an abortion at Planned Parenthood's Lincoln South Street clinic. The abortion perforated the woman's uterus and she was left sterile as a result of the emergency surgery done at a hospital.

For at least eight weeks during the Spring of 2008, the PP South St. facility ceased abortions. It is not known if the malpractice lawsuit had anything to do with that, but at the same time, Meryl Severson was placed on leave from the facility. Severson is the same abortionist who commits abortions for PP's Council Bluffs, Iowa facility. During this same time, abortions have also ceased in Council Bluffs and have not resumed. Sadly, in mid-June, abortions resumed at the PP Lincoln facility with a different abortionist coming from Omaha.



Gabriel's Corner CPC in Council Bluffs. Volunteers include, from left, Dennis Shea, Treasurer, Jean Plourde, Founder, Christine Wilson, Executive Director and husband Roger Wilson, Volunteer.



Planned Parenthood in Council Bluffs.



Baby's closet at Gabriel's Corner, located at 131 South 16th St. in Council Bluffs, Iowa.



Where Do the Candidates Stand on Life?

John McCain

Barack Obama



Roe v. Wade

**Note: The "Freedom of Choice Act" is a bill that would invalidate virtually all state and federal limitations on abortion, including partial-birth abortion.*

OPPOSES

- Voted to oppose *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that allows abortion for any reason.
- "...We would be better off by having *Roe v. Wade* return to the states....I don't believe the...Court should be legislating in the way that they did on *Roe v. Wade*."

SUPPORTS

- Co-sponsor of the "Freedom of Choice Act."
- "I have consistently advocated for reproductive choice and will make preserving women's rights under *Roe v. Wade* a priority as President."

Partial-Birth Abortion Ban

***Note: Gonzales v. Carhart is the April 2007 Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the federal Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.*

The partial-birth abortion procedure — used from the fifth month on — involves pulling a living baby feet-first out of the womb, except for the head, puncturing the skull and suctioning out the brain. The great majority of partial-birth abortions are performed on healthy babies of healthy mothers.

SUPPORTS

- Voted for the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.
- "Today's Supreme Court ruling [in *Gonzales v. Carhart*"] is a victory for those who cherish the sanctity of life."

OPPOSES

- "I am extremely concerned that [*Gonzales v. Carhart*"] will embolden state legislatures to enact further measures to restrict a woman's right to choose, and that the conservative Supreme Court justices will look for other opportunities to erode *Roe v. Wade*."

Taxpayer Funding of Abortion

OPPOSES

- Voted in favor of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion through the Medicaid program.
- Voted consistently against federal funding of abortion.

SUPPORTS

- Voted against legislation in the Illinois State Senate that prohibited taxpayer dollars from being used to pay for abortion.
- His campaign has stated that he "does not support" the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion through the Medicaid program.

Parental Notification Law

SUPPORTS

- Voted to support a bill that would have required an abortionist to notify at least one parent before performing an abortion on a minor girl from another state.

OPPOSES

- Voted to block a bill that would have required an abortionist to notify at least one parent before performing an abortion on a minor girl from another state.

Protecting Abortion Survivors

SUPPORTED

- Voted for legislation that provides protection for babies who survive abortions equal to protection received by babies who are spontaneously born prematurely.

OPPOSED

- Voted three times against a bill in the Illinois State Senate that would have provided protection for babies who survive abortions equal to protection received by babies who are spontaneously born prematurely.

Embryonic Stem Cell Research

SUPPORTS

- Voted in favor of funding embryonic stem cell research.
- "I believe that skin stem cell research has every potential very soon of making that discussion [embryonic stem cell research] academic."

SUPPORTS

- Voted in favor of funding embryonic stem cell research.
- "Embryonic stem cells can be obtained from a number of sources including in vitro fertilization. ...We should expand and accelerate research using these embryos..."

Human Cloning

OPPOSES

- His campaign website states that he "opposes the intentional creation of human embryos for research purposes."

SUPPORTS

- Co-sponsored a bill (S. 1520) in 2005 that would allow the cloning of human embryos to be used in research, but prohibit placing them in wombs.

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Nebraska Right to Life PAC Analysis of Primary Election Results

Here is a cursory analysis of the Primary 2008 results going over the Nebraska Right to Life Political Action Committee (NRL PAC) Voter Guide & Endorsement List. Out of 48 NRL PAC endorsed candidates for Federal and State races, 35 made it through the Primary.

Our NRL PAC Board will meet in July to discuss targeting races for strong emphasis on literature-dropping and mailing our Voter Guide for the General Election. Other legislative races not targeted present a wash for either pro-life or pro-abortion, depending on who the term limited senator is. NRL PAC intends to meet with those who have made it through the Primary who we did not get a chance to interview in the Primary. Perhaps further vetting will occur or we will be further convinced that our initial PAC Board decisions were the right ones.

Anyone who has any concerns about NRL PAC-endorsed

candidates can direct any printed, written or taped evidence of a candidate saying one thing to NRL and something else in their district to us and we will look into it and discuss it with said candidate when we meet with him/her. We also rely heavily on our local people in the districts to have their ear to the ground and report back. Any concerns you have should be sent immediately as we are meeting with candidates this summer.

One other thing, our Primary Voter Guide was already printed by the time the Planned Parenthood endorsements came out so our General Election Voter Guide will show who PP endorsed. If you would like to receive a copy of the Primary Voter Guide showing who lost and who won, e-mail or call the NRL office to request one.

The General Election Voter Guide should be available by early September.



Babies Like Little Angels

By Andrew Brase,
Bloomfield, Neb.

The beating heart of an unborn child
May sound like other things.
Perhaps it's quite like what we'd hear
If we heard angels' wings.

Little angels laugh and sing,
Dance and fly and pray.
Babies too, murmur and coo
Bringing joy to God as they play.

Every soul that ventures near
Is pure and like no other,
Bringing grace and joy and love
And blessing to the mother.

The innocence of that tiny heart
All heaven smiles to see.
"Who welcomes such a little one
Most surely welcomes me."