



THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

May 15, 2002

The Honorable Sam Brownback
United States Senate
303 Senate Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Brownback:

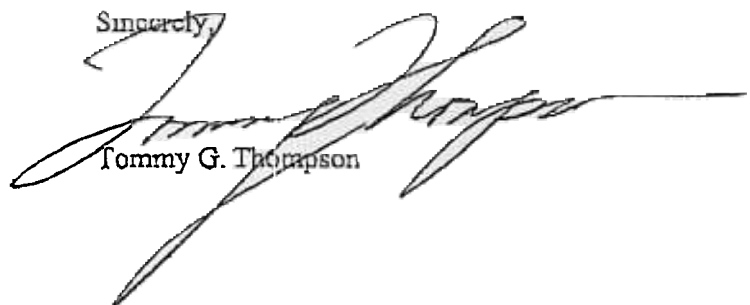
Thank you for your letter regarding human cloning. As you know, the Administration strongly supports a complete ban on all human cloning. Such a measure (introduced by Representatives Weldon and Stupak) was passed by the House of Representatives last year by a strong bipartisan majority (a margin of more than a hundred votes), and the President has made clear that he supports passage in the Senate of the Brownback-Landrieu Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2001, which also bans all human cloning.

As the President has stated, anything other than a total ban on human cloning would be both unethical and ineffective, a ban on the implantation of cloned embryos being virtually impossible to enforce. Moreover, a law that authorized research cloning would likely result not only in the creation of embryo farms but also in international trafficking in human eggs. In short, the President does not believe that "reproductive" and "research" cloning should be treated differently, given that they both require the creation, exploitation, and destruction of human embryos.

I am aware that Senator Specter, joined by Senators Feinstein, Hatch, Kennedy, Harkin, Boxer, Durbin, Miller, Corzine, Mikulski, Clinton and Thurmond, has recently introduced a bill that would allow for the creation of cloned human embryos for research purposes (S. 2439). The Administration opposes this bill, which would create a new class of human embryos whose development past the early embryonic stage would be illegal. Such a bill would put the federal government in the position of permitting the creation of human embryos for research purposes and then mandating their destruction. Moreover, this bill would not even effectively ban the cloning of a child, because it naively suggests that a line at implantation could be enforced, yet provides absolutely no measure to monitor what is done with cloned embryos or to prevent implantation.

I know that the President would very much like to sign a comprehensive bill that unequivocally bans all human cloning. I am equally certain, however, that the Administration could not support any measure that purported to ban "reproductive" cloning while authorizing "research" cloning, and I would recommend to the President that he veto such a bill.

Sincerely,



Tommy G. Thompson