

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 225
By: Paxton
State Affairs
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The use of public funds should be governed by sound principles of both fiscal responsibility and ethical concerns. Stem cell research involving embryonic stem cells is very speculative and has proven to be very problematic. On the other hand, there is ongoing research using non-embryonic cells which is proving to have significant advantages. With limited state funds, we should not be directing state resources into research which is highly speculative when there are projects with foreseeable and actual therapeutic benefit that are also in need of funds.

Second, many people attach a belief about the sanctity of life and society's duty to protect life to a biological definition that life begins at fertilization. This position results in a strong moral objection to research that involves the destruction of embryos.

While public policy regarding human life in its earliest stages has been vigorously debated for many years, one issue over which it has been easier to gain consensus is in the area of funding. Majorities of legislators have consistently voted that public funds should not be used for things which many citizens find to be very morally objectionable. Therefore, the purpose of this bill is to ban the use of public funds for research which involves the destruction of human embryos. The bill does not prohibit this research if it is funded with private dollars.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Adds Chapter 169 to the Health and Safety Code prohibiting the use of state money for biomedical research which is disallowed by federal law which was in effect on January 01, 2007.

SECTION 2. Makes the Act effective on September 1, 2007.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2007.