



CATHOLIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Upholding the Principles of the Catholic Faith in the Science and Practice of Medicine

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CMA Protests Obama Executive Order Funding Life-Destroying Embryonic Stem Cell Research

DATELINE March 10, 2009 – The Catholic Medical Association (CMA) protests President Obama’s March 9, 2009, executive order providing taxpayer funding for research that destroys the lives of human embryos. This decision demonstrates a disregard for human life, for the beliefs of millions of Americans, and for the lives and health of those suffering from devastating diseases and injuries.

CMA President Louis C. Breschi, M.D., stated, “It is very unfortunate that, at a time when ethical options are showing greater promise than ever, and when the nation’s economy is suffering, President Obama would direct more taxpayer dollars into scientific research that is unethical, ineffective, unworkable, and unnecessary.”

John F. Brehany, Ph.D., CMA’s executive director, explained further: “President Obama’s radical new policy is *unethical* because human beings—at the embryonic stage of life—are being destroyed in the name of curing disease. It is *ineffective* because human embryonic stem cell research has no demonstrated success in treating diseases, despite receiving hundreds of millions of dollars in federal, state, and private funding. Basing therapies on human embryonic stem cells is *unworkable* because it will require obtaining human eggs from thousands of women—a painful, dangerous, and expensive process. And finally, destroying human embryos is *unnecessary*. Not only have adult stem cell (ASC) therapies demonstrated real-life success in treating dozens of diseases, but new induced pluripotent stem cell (iPSC) techniques have created cells with all the properties of embryonic stem cells—without destroying human lives to obtain them.”

President Obama’s action belies the language of consensus, high ideals, and scientific objectivity in which it is wrapped. For, at the same time he overturned the executive order limiting federal funding to those embryonic stem cell lines created before August 9, 2001, President Obama also revoked, without comment, a June 20, 2007, executive order (no. 13435) encouraging the National Institutes of Health to promote research into *clinically effective alternative* sources of stem cell lines—sources that do not depend on destroying human life.

Finally, while President Obama claimed that he would reject “cloning for human reproduction,” he failed to acknowledge that he actually *supports* human cloning—for therapy and research. His policy provides taxpayer funding for a new industry dedicated to creating and destroying human lives in labs.

The Catholic Medical Association is the nation’s largest professional organization of Catholic physicians. To learn more about the CMA and its publications, go to www.cathmed.org.