

Embryonic Stem Cell Group Hails Ballot Petition Drive Results

SOUTHFIELD (July 7, 2008) — A nonprofit group today said it will ramp up its efforts to educate citizens on the benefits of stem cell research after a grassroots campaign turned in enough signatures to place a proposal to modernize Michigan's stem cell research law on the November ballot.

“Stem cell research is a new frontier in medicine that could unlock cures to deadly diseases and injuries and save thousands of lives, including those of our friends, family and loved ones,” said **Marcia Baum**, executive director of **Michigan Citizens for Stem Cell Research and Cures**. “Our goal is to inform the citizens of Michigan about the tremendous opportunities for stem cell research so voters can make informed decisions.”

Michigan law prohibits scientists from performing research on leftover embryos from fertility clinics that would otherwise be thrown away. Scientists who perform embryonic stem cell research in Michigan can be sent to prison for up to five years. The only other states with laws as restrictive as Michigan's are North Dakota, South Dakota, Louisiana and Arkansas.

Modernizing Michigan's stem cell research law will protect Michigan's ban on human cloning and allow researchers to use ethical means of seeking out new cures for diseases and injuries.

“Michigan researchers are being hamstrung by outdated laws when they could be working on cures for diseases and injuries like cancer, Parkinson's, juvenile diabetes and spinal cord injuries,” Baum said. “Stem cell research provides hope for countless patients throughout Michigan.”

In the coming months, MCSCRC, which is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, non-partisan educational group, will continue to visit Michigan communities to educate local citizens and community leaders about the science, the benefits and the policies surrounding embryonic stem cell research.

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