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## Catholic Official: No Apology For Tuskegee Ad

*TIM SKUBICK*

He was silent during the contentious battle over Proposal 2, but now Paul **LONG** from the Michigan Catholic Conference is talking and he's not apologizing for anything his side did in the fight over embryonic stem cell research.

Critics contend MiCAUSE stepped over the line in its advertisements aimed at the African American community, which attempted to compare the development of new embryonic stem cell lines to the Tuskegee experiments in Alabama. In 1932, the federal government started a 40-year experiment in which 399 poor black men went untreated and were allowed to die of syphilis so scientists could see what would happen if nothing was done.

"That ad ran across the state. It was in Oakland County and the Upper Peninsula," Long reported.

"I don't understand the flak," he told *MIRS*. He said he believes those upset by it "were expecting a debate about theology, ethics, and morals" but got a debate over what would happen if adequate controls were not imposed on the university research -- the so-called "policy ramifications" of the ballot plan.

Long said this was never an issue about stem cell research, per se.

Asked if he wanted to make an apology he quickly responded, "Not at all."

He concedes his anti-Prop 2 side was in an "uphill battle" from the opening bell since it was fighting against the "notion of hope and a cure." "That was very difficult" to overcome, he said.

The huge voter turnout in Michigan meant defeat for Long and company. Since Democrats overwhelmingly backed the research and more of them voted than Republicans, that ended up being the margin of victory for the pro-stem cell coalition, Long said.