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House Not Interested In Stem Cell Clean-Up Bills?

Edsel **FORD**, one of the prime backers of the embryonic stem cell research ballot proposal from 2008, stood outside the Speaker's office on Tuesday, saying he would be pleased if Rep. Andy **DILLON** (D-Redford Twp.) did not move a Right to Life-backed measure it claims is needed to clarify the new law.

"If the bill could be put off to the side and not dealt with, that would be the perfect situation I think," he told *MIRS* while waiting to see Dillon on the issue. Ford and representatives from Michigan State, the University of Michigan and Wayne State, along with representatives from the Michigan Citizens for Stem Cell Research and Cures (MCSCRC) met with the Speaker.

One of the participants reported that Dillon did not expect to see the measure come out of Rep. Mark **MEADOWS'** House Judiciary Committee. Dillon's office was asked to confirm that and word came back that the Speaker "can't confirm it."

Meanwhile, Michigan Right to Life Lobbyist Ed **RIVET** said he does not want to move legislation seeking to clarify the stem cell law out of the Senate until the "ducks are lined up in the House." Rivet reported that he's already met face to face with Meadows and the East Lansing Democrat reportedly told Rivet that he understood the need for the bills and "don't presume they are there (in his committee) to die." Meadows has not confirmed that statement.

Members of the MCSCRC coalition staged a news conference today. Later in the day, they lobbied senators in front of the Senate chambers.

Jill **GEISENDORFER**, the mother of a 16-year-old boy with Type 1 Diabetes, accused Right to Life of trying to "kill" the ballot proposal.

Both Rivet and Sen. Tom **GEORGE** (R-Kalamazoo), the bill package's sponsor, deny that charge.

Rivet said he wants to prevent "unregulated science" and so definitions and penalties are needed.

George said he wants to keep hope alive for a cure to some diseases, but the Legislature has a duty to protect the public health. He accused the other side of refusing to negotiate with him on new language if the current language is unacceptable.

"Their view is do nothing," George said. "They've refused to walk in the door. There is still time. I want to work with them."

Ford said the research law "brings technology to Michigan and new thinking . . . just as the Governor referred to in her State of the State." He said the RTL forces want to "make the research more difficult."

*(Contributed by Senior Capital Correspondent Tim **SKUBICK**.)*