



August 4, 2008

Mich. Board Sets Hearing to Decide if Measure Loosening Stem Cell Research Restrictions Will Be On Ballot

The Michigan Board of State Canvassers on Wednesday scheduled an Aug. 21 meeting to review signatures submitted for state ballot initiatives, including a proposal to loosen state restrictions on human embryonic stem cell research, the *AP/Lansing State Journal* reports. The board also set an Aug. 13 deadline for opponents to challenge sample signatures. According to the *AP/Journal*, opponents are unlikely to challenge signatures on the stem cell measure (*AP/Lansing State Journal*, 7/30).

Current Michigan law allows research only on embryonic stem cell lines from California, Illinois or other states with less restrictive laws. Those lines sometimes are patented by other researchers. The proposed initiative would allow researchers in Michigan to conduct stem cell research using embryos created for fertility treatments that were not used or were unsuitable for implantation and would otherwise be discarded. According to supporters of the initiative, the language specifies that the proposal does not seek to change state laws that prohibit and criminalize human cloning. The [Michigan Catholic Conference](#) and [Right to Life of Michigan](#) oppose the proposal because it involves the destruction of human embryos. An opposition group called [Michigan Citizens Against Unregistered Science and Experimentation](#) also has formed.

The [Stem Cell Research Ballot Question Committee](#) last month said it had filed more than 570,000 signatures in support of the initiative. More than 380,000 of the signatures must be ruled valid for the proposal to appear on the November ballot (*Daily Women's Health Policy Report*, 7/9).

Reprinted with kind permission from <http://www.nationalpartnership.org>. You can view the entire Daily Women's Health Policy Report, search the archives, or sign up for email delivery [here](#). The *Daily Women's Health Policy Report* is published by the National Partnership for Women and families.