



Everything Michigan

Muskegon Chronicle

In Dana Reeve's memory, help lift the stem cell ban

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One of the saddest stories in recent days, and there have been many, was the news of Dana Reeve's death. A non-smoker, the widow of Christopher "Superman" Reeve tragically died of lung cancer at age 44.

Reeve's life, like that of her husband, changed overnight when the famed actor broke his neck. The paralyzed Reeve spent the next decade of his life not in self-pity, but in civic activism as the spokesman for expanding research into spinal-cord paralysis cures. Always by his side was his wife, who succeeded him and continued his efforts.

Explaining her dedication to the cause, she explained: "I was married to a man who never gave up."

Among the initiatives favored by the Reeves, and by others who know that science and research hold the keys to the cure for the dread diseases that affect our loved ones, is the lifting of bans, like that in Michigan, on embryonic stem cell research.

It is believed that research efforts using these cells can lead to breakthroughs not only in spinal-cord paralysis, but in dread afflictions like Alzheimer's disease. Nancy Reagan, widow of the late president Ronald Reagan, became an outspoken advocate of stem cell research, alongside the Reeves.

Here in Michigan, you can help further the cause by asking our local legislators to support State Rep. Andy Meisner's package of bills to lift Michigan's ban on embryonic stem cell research. We have supported this effort in past editorials, but we believe Dana Reeve's death compels us to revisit this important issue.

The Ferndale Democrat Meisner is rowing against the political tide, inasmuch as there is considerable faith-based opposition to easing restrictions on embryonic stem cell research. So far, no local legislators have dared support Meisner. Only your pressure will force them to budge on this important issue.

Restricting scientific research on religious grounds might be a consideration in some instances, but we don't believe this is one of them. Some embryonic cell lines can be obtained from fertility clinics that might trash these potential life-giving cures. Why throw away what could be discoveries that might save lives or ease suffering?

Call or write your state legislators and tell them you want them to support Rep. Andy Meisner's stem cell

research bills.

Dana Reeve would want you to.

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