

Embryonic stem cell research approved by House committee

Written by

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A House committee has approved legislation setting rules for how research can be performed on human embryonic stem cells.

The measure was passed by a 45-35 vote and would permit research on stem cells left over from in-vitro fertilization that would otherwise be discarded. A \$10 million appropriation was removed from the bill, however, that would have helped distribute grants to nonprofit groups conducting the research. Despite passionate opposition from conservatives and religious groups, the bill now goes to the full state House. Opponents argue that research on adult stem cells, which come from specialized organs and tissues after birth, generates better results. Federally, legislation passed by Congress to ease federal restrictions on the research has been vetoed twice by President George W. Bush. While states and private organizations can fund embryonic stem cell research, federal support is limited to cells that existed as of August 9, 2001.