



BIOTECHNOLOGY
INDUSTRY
ORGANIZATION

January 31, 2005

The Honorable Shay Schual-Berke, M.D.
331 John L. O'Brien Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Dear Representative Schual-Berke:

On behalf of the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), I am writing to commend you for your commitment to promote and advance stem cell research in Washington. Your support of House Bill 1268 is greatly appreciated.

BIO is the national trade organization representing more than 1,100 biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations in all 50 states and 33 nations. In Washington, we work closely with the Washington Biotechnology and Biomedical Association (WBBA) to represent Washington's vibrant biotechnology community.

Medical research has taken quantum leaps in the past decade. Scientists are identifying and developing innovative cures to deadly and debilitating diseases. According the National Institutes of Health and the National Academies of Science, human embryonic stem (HES) cells have shown incredible promise toward developing breakthrough treatments for a variety of intractable diseases including various cancers, kidney disease, diabetes, hepatitis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease and many other diseases. Scientists already have demonstrated that growth factors can direct the development of human embryonic cells into, for example, insulin-producing cells that might help cure type-1 diabetes.

House Bill 1268 will spur this research through a specific authorization. It will also help facilitate the voluntary donation of excess fertilized eggs for stem cell research. In addition, the bill also protects the right of scientists to use somatic

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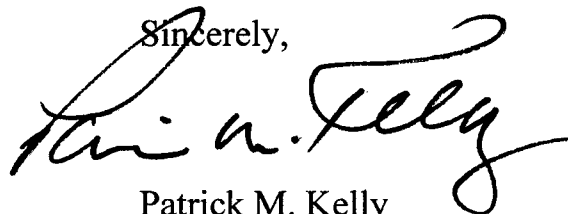
cell nuclear transfer technology for the derivation of HES cells. This innovative process may some day improve treatments, minimizing the risk of rejection of new cells and tissue because it uses an individual's own cells to treat specific diseases.

BIO is committed to the socially responsible use of biotechnology to save or improve lives. We recognize that there are moral and ethical concerns surrounding human embryonic stem cell research. However, this bill strikes an appropriate balance by encouraging potentially life saving research to advance under a carefully constructed regulatory scheme. House Bill 1268 will ensure that researchers in Washington can employ this valuable technology.

Washington's position as a center of excellence for biotechnology research is beyond the reach of many states. However, there are states that are aggressively pursuing legislation to attract biotechnology companies. California, the state with the largest biotechnology industry presence in the country, recognized the promise of this technology by recently enacting Proposition 71. Passage House Bill 1268 in Washington, will further cement the state's reputation as a preeminent world leader in biomedicine and biotechnology.

Once again, thank you for your leadership on this important legislation. If you have any questions, please contact Patrick Kelly at (202) 962-9503 or by e-mail at pkelly@bio.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick M. Kelly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "K".

Patrick M. Kelly
Vice President
State Government Relations