



For Immediate Release
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News Release

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Wisconsin Voters Overwhelmingly Support Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Madison, WI – Wisconsin voters overwhelmingly support embryonic stem cell research, according to the findings of a statewide survey of likely Wisconsin voters. The poll found that the vast majority of voters know about the potential for life-saving cures and treatments that embryonic stem cell research is likely to provide. In addition, nearly two-thirds of Wisconsin voters support expanding federal policies to permit more research. The latter is particularly timely as the United States House of Representatives is expected to vote on federal expansion of embryonic stem cells later this week.

The survey, conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, a nationally respected survey research company based in Washington, DC, telephoned 500 likely voters in Wisconsin May 9 – 10. The telephone survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.38 percent.

Jim Burton, Senior Project Director at Public Opinion Strategies, discussed the results of the survey at a news conference at the State Capitol on Monday (May 23). Among the poll's key findings:

- Sixty-nine percent of voters support embryonic stem cell research.
- Independent voters support this issue by almost a four-to-one margin (69 percent support and 18 percent oppose).
- A clear majority of voters (59 percent) supports the idea that the state of Wisconsin should provide funding for research on human embryonic stem cells.
- The issue carries a 20-point advantage among Republican voters (53 percent-33 percent).
- Seventy-seven percent of those polled say they have heard “a lot” or “some” about the issue.

“Those who know about the issue are more supportive,” Burton said. “Seventy-one percent say they have seen, read or heard a lot or some about embryonic stem cell

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research. This shows that supporters are well-informed and feel strongly about embryonic stem cell research.”

He added that the survey is strong evidence that support is widespread among key swing voting blocks.

Human embryonic stem cells are derived from donated embryos, or blastocysts, less than a week old. These embryos are donated by parents who have gone through the process of in vitro fertilization, and have surplus embryos that they will not be using to try and have more children.

“Significantly, the survey demonstrates that almost two-thirds of voters support expanding President Bush’s policy that currently limits stem cell research to twenty-two existing lines of embryonic stem cells,” Burton said. Sixty-three percent of voters support expanding President Bush’s stated policy on stem cell research; only 23 percent say they would support keeping the policy the same.

“Only a very small portion of the electorate supports limiting embryonic stem cell research. Voters understand that embryonic stem cell research offers more potential for new treatments than research currently taking place on adult stem cells,” Burton said.

The polled found that 68 percent of voters support the idea that research on embryonic stem cells offers more potential to provide lifelong treatment for more types of diseases than research on adult stem cells. Burton added that 43 percent strongly support this idea.

Moreover, Burton said there is strong support for state funding of embryonic stem cell research.

“Fifty-nine percent of voters support state funding of stem cell research. Voters favor finding treatments for diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, Lou Gehrig’s disease, spinal cord injuries and Parkinson’s disease over the idea that the research destroys innocent life (29 percent oppose),” Burton said.

Cures For Tomorrow is an independent organization committed to promoting stem cell research in Wisconsin. No government funds or GPR dollars were involved in funding the survey; funding came from the following organizations: the University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation, the Wisconsin Alumni Association, the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), the Wisconsin Biotechnology and Medical Device Association and the WiCell Research Institute.

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