

Rep. Rothman Supports Bipartisan Stem Cell Research Legislation

For Immediate Release

Contact: Brice Peyre

Phone: 201-646-0808

REP. ROTHMAN SUPPORTS BIPARTISAN STEM CELL RESEARCH LEGISLATION

--House Passes H.R. 810, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005

Co-sponsored by Congressman Rothman--

(Washington, DC) Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fair Lawn) today helped pass a bipartisan stem cell research bill in the House of Representatives by voting for H. Res. 810. The legislation, which Rothman has co-sponsored, is also known as the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005 and it is designed to allow federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. Embryonic stem cells have the ability to develop into virtually any cell in the body and could be used to treat a variety of diseases. Rothman feels embryonic stem cell research is the key to decreasing the pain and suffering of so many people affected by devastating and degenerative diseases.

"We have all known someone who has suffered from Lou Gehrig's disease, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Rett Syndrome, lupus, pulmonary fibrosis, juvenile diabetes, autism, cystic fibrosis, osteoporosis, spinal cord injuries, heart disease or cancer," said Congressman Rothman. "By passing H.R. 810, we now have the opportunity to help all of those with serious illnesses and injuries. Furthermore, we have a moral obligation to do everything we can to help the millions of Americans afflicted with so many diseases, whose lives we hold today in our hands, by allowing federal funding to be used for this promising research."

This legislation lifts President George W. Bush's 2001 ban on new federally funded research on embryonic stem cells. To guarantee the ethical use of embryonic stem cells, the authors of H. Res. 810 have placed certain restrictions on the bill. Under H. Res. 810, embryos used for stem cell research will come from donor participation in In Vitro Fertilization (IVF), so embryos will not be created and cloned for research. H. Res. 810 also places restriction on the National Institute of Health to ensure rogue scientists are not performing dangerous and unethical experiments. Ethical stem cell research provides the world of science the opportunity to study the growth and differentiation of individual cells. By understanding these processes, it could provide insight into the causes and possible cures for a variety of illnesses, diseases, and injuries.

"The United States has long been the leader in groundbreaking medical research. Today we have ensured that America will continue to take the lead in health care advances," said Congressman Rothman.

Rothman also said he would continue to use his position on the House Appropriations Committee, which allocates all discretionary funds in the federal budget, to obtain increased funding for stem cell research. H. Res. 810 passed the House by a vote of 238 to 194 and now heads to the Senate for its consideration. President Bush has stated he will veto this measure should it come before his desk for signature.