

## Press Release

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# News Flash

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### **Virginia Bishops' Representative Comments on Recent Federal and State Embryonic Stem-Cell Debates**

Less than a day after the U.S. Senate approved legislation to expand the use of federal money for research that requires the destruction of human embryos, President Bush vetoed the measure. Commenting on this flurry of activity, Virginia Catholic Conference director Jeff Caruso said, "After the U.S. Senate ignored the difference between research that requires the taking of human life and research that does not, President Bush is to be commended for his recognition that no human being -- no matter how young or how tiny -- should be destroyed in the name of science." Caruso also noted that Virginia's two U.S. Senators, John Warner and George Allen, registered opposing votes, with Allen voting against the expanded funding and Warner voting for it.

With President Bush's veto, Caruso predicted that "those trying to secure public dollars for their embryonic stem-cell research projects will resume their previous focus on getting money from state coffers." Virginia lawmakers, he said, should recognize "the critical need to establish ethical parameters for state research spending that would respect unborn lives and taxpayers' consciences."

Despite over 25 years of research, stem cells obtained by destroying human embryos have not helped a single human patient. However, stem cells obtained from adult tissues and umbilical-cord blood (obtained without terminating any lives) have already helped thousands of patients with about 100 different conditions.

The Virginia Catholic Conference is the public-policy representative of the Catholic bishops serving the Virginia dioceses of Arlington and Richmond.

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