



Consumer Advocates Welcome New International Stem Cell Research Guidelines Emphasizing Need to Promote Public Benefit and to Guard Against Unrealistic Expectations of Success

SANTA MONICA, Calif., Feb. 1 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The Foundation For Taxpayer and Consumer Rights (FTCR) praised provisions in new international stem cell research guidelines issued today that emphasize the need for researchers "to promote public benefit as their primary objective" when turning over discoveries to commercial firms.

The guidelines also say: "scientists and clinicians must be transparent and truthful about issues relating to human stem cell research and its potential to advance medicine." They urge scientists "to guard against the creation of unrealistic expectations of success" and "to educate the public about the many steps required ... to establish treatments as safe and effective."

Read a copy of the International Society for Stem Cell Research Guidelines (ISSCR) here: <http://www.isscr.org/guidelines/index.htm>.

"We have long insisted that California's \$6-billion stem cell research program not be a blank check for biotech," said John M. Simpson, FTCR Stem Cell Project Director. "We are pleased the international guidelines stress public benefit and we will continue to insist that California's regulations provide affordable access to any discoveries or cures resulting from research funded by the state program."

Too often stem cell advocates have hyped the immediate benefit of stem cell research, FTCR said. "I'm delighted to see the call for realism," Simpson said. "The Scientific Strategic Plan for the California Institute For Regenerative Medicine already reflects that realistic approach."

The ISSCR also called on researchers to share their results. "The ISSCR endorses the principle that as a prerequisite of engaging in human stem cell research, researchers must agree to make the materials readily accessible to the biomedical research community for non-commercial research," it said.

California voters approved creating a stem cell program that will fund \$3 billion in research and facilities over a decade. With bond financing the taxpayers will pay \$6 billion. Bond sales have been delayed because of a court challenge, but the first research grants will be awarded at the stem cell oversight committee's meeting in San Francisco later this month funded by a \$150 million loan from the state's general fund.

The Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer Rights is California's leading non-profit and non-partisan consumer watchdog group. For more information visit us on the web at <http://www.ConsumerWatchdog.org>. Our stem cell information page is located at <http://www.stemcellwatch.org/>.

SOURCE Foundation for Taxpayer & Consumer Rights

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