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Archbishop warns of consequences of stem cell vote. 05/06/2007. ABC News Online

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Archbishop warns of consequences of stem cell vote

The Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, George Pell, says he has not reached a decision on whether he will offer communion to the New South Wales Premier if he supports new stem cell legislation in the state parliament.

The legislation allowing therapeutic cloning will be debated in the lower house this afternoon, and Premier Morris Iemma has already indicated he will support the bill.

Mr Iemma, who is a Catholic, introduced the bill allowing the therapeutic cloning into Parliament last week.

Cardinal Pell has called on all Catholic, Christian and pro-life MPs to oppose the bill.

He says he is not threatening to excommunicate members who support the bill, but they must consider the consequences.

"It is a serious moral matter," he said.

"Catholic politicians who vote for this legislation must realise that their voting has consequences for their place in the life of the church."

Cardinal Pell says he has not spoken to the Premier about the issue, but the legislation is taking the state in a perverse new direction.

New South Wales MPs will start debating the bill this afternoon.

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