

## Christians Urge NSW Parliamentarians To Vote No In Stem Cell Debate

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by Joshua Chan

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On Tuesday the 6th June 2007, which is tomorrow, the NSW Legislative Assembly will introduce a bill overturning a ban on therapeutic cloning where the debate will be 'truncated,' stated the NSW Catholic Bishop in a press statement.

The bill will allow NSW parliamentary members to exercise a conscience vote. Reverend Ross Clifford, from the Australian Baptist Union, asked parliamentarians to consider whether it is right for a human embryo to be created and then destroyed for "allegedly" producing some benefit.

He has urged all Baptist and other Christians to express their concern to their elected- representatives. He said: "As a community...we must stand up for the human dignity and worth of the least amongst us."

Cardinal George Pell, the Sydney Catholic Archbishop on behalf of the Bishops of the 10 NSW Catholic dioceses goes one step further saying that no Christian or people with respect for human life – who has been properly informed about the facts and ethics of this issue will vote in favour of this "immoral" legislation.

He said: "No Catholic politician – indeed, no Christian or person with respect for human life – who has properly informed his conscience about the facts and ethics in this area should vote in favour of this immoral legislation."

NSW Premier Morris Iemma has indicated that he will vote for the bill despite the opposition of Christians, and will encourage his MPs to do so, reported the AAP. The parliamentary vote in NSW will lift the ban on cloning of embryonic stem cells for scientific research.

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