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## Gillard to vote for stem cell change

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Federal Labor's health spokeswoman Julia Gillard says she has wrestled long and hard over the stem cells debate and has landed on the side of overturning the restrictive laws.

Her comments came after the Senate voted on Tuesday night 34 to 32 in favour of Liberal senator Kay Patterson's private member's bill, which would allow scientists to clone embryos to extract their stem cells for medical research.

The bill next proceeds to the House of Representatives, where Ms Gillard sits as the member for outer-Melbourne seat of Lalor.

Ms Gillard, like all other MPs, has the go ahead to vote as her conscience dictates.

"I struggled with this decision and I spent a lot of time thinking about it," Ms Gillard told ABC radio.

"My role as shadow minister for health has mainly been to get the best possible information I can out to my Labor colleagues."

She said she had to put in some serious thinking on the issues.

"I wasn't automatically in favour or automatically against. I had to wrestle with the issues," Ms Gillard said.

"But on balance, I've come down on the side of saying we're prepared to go with what the Lockhart review has recommended, and I do believe that (Liberal) senator (Kay) Patterson's bill faithfully represents that.

"In the Senate it has been amended to remove the use of animal eggs and I can understand why people were concerned about that."

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Julia Gillard ... has come down in favour of the Lockhart review.

Photo: *Andrew Taylor*