

CONTROLLER JOHN CHIANG

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

300 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.445.2636
www.controller.ca.gov

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CONTACT: RUSS LOPEZ

916-445-2636

Chiang Disappointed Congressional Stem Cell Support Falls Short

SACRAMENTO – California State Controller John Chiang today made the following statement in response to today’s U. S. House of Representatives vote on stem cell research funding:

“The good news is that in its first 100 hours, our new Congress was courageous enough to pass another stem cell research bill and keep this issue in the public spotlight. Unfortunately, President Bush will turn a blind eye on promising science that could bring hope and salvation for millions of people suffering from debilitating and life-threatening diseases. Today’s vote falls short of the two-thirds margin needed to overturn a veto.

“Stem cell research is the only hope for people who suffer from cancer, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases. Here, in California, we have the opportunity, environment, and expertise to make major inroads in this potentially life-saving research. In 2004, 59% of voters approved the stem cell initiative. I am committed to making sure their voices are heard by accelerating the work of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.”

Earlier this week, a report detailed how researchers discovered significant amounts of stem cells in amniotic fluid, a liquid surrounding the fetus during pregnancy. Controller Chiang made the following statement regarding this new information:

“As a long-time supporter of embryonic stem cell research, I believe the significance of discovering an alternative source for obtaining stem cells provides scientists with more options that will only serve to accelerate their research efforts.

“As Chair of a fiscal oversight committee charged with closely reviewing the commission that awards \$3 billion for stem cell research, I will continue to fight for stem cell research while ensuring financial accountability and oversight.”

Apart from chairing the California Financial Accountability Oversight Committee (CFAOC), Controller Chiang can appoint members to the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), which oversees the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

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