

For immediate release:

Monday, March 24, 2003, 8 a.m. ET

For further information:

Douglas Johnson, Legislative Director  
(202) 626-8820  
Legfederal@aol.com, www.nrlc.org

**After overwhelming votes in Arkansas legislature,  
Governor Huckabee today will sign complete ban on human cloning;  
big votes put spotlights on Senators Blanche Lincoln and Mark Pryor**

Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee (R) today will sign a complete ban on human cloning, patterned after the Brownback-Landrieu bill that is currently under consideration in the U.S. Senate.

The Arkansas bill, SB 185, passed the state House 88-5 and the state Senate 34-0. The House rejected an amendment to permit human cloning for research. Governor Huckabee's office has announced that he will sign the bill today at 2 p.m. local time (3 p.m. Eastern Time).

In the U.S. Senate, there is currently a struggle underway between two diametrically conflicting bills dealing with human cloning. The Brownback-Landrieu bill (S. 245), on which Arkansas bill SB 185 is based, would ban the creation of human embryos by cloning. The competing Hatch-Feinstein bill (S. 303) would permit and encourage the cloning of human embryos for biomedical research that would kill them. President Bush strongly supports the complete ban on human cloning for any purpose.

The U.S. Senate has not yet voted on either bill. However, last year the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* reported that Senator Blanche Lambert Lincoln (D) "tends to favor reproducing human embryos [by cloning] because of the potential medical benefits of such research." The paper quoted Lincoln as saying, "I do think we need to look at therapeutic cloning." ("Lincoln sees pluses in cloning embryos," by Paul Barton, *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, May 2, 2002.)

Senator Mark Pryor (D), who took office in January, 2003, has not yet taken a position on the competing bills to allow or prohibit the creation of human embryos by cloning.

**"President Bush has warned that unless the cloning of human embryos is**

**banned, ‘human embryo farms’ will open for business,” said Douglas Johnson, legislative director for the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC). “We commend the legislature and Governor Huckabee for taking decisive action to prevent human embryo farming and human fetus farming in Arkansas. In light of these overwhelming votes to reject human embryo farming and human fetusfarming, we hope that Senator Blanche Lincoln will reconsider her past statements in favor of human cloning for biomedical research, and that Senator Mark Pryor will decide to support a complete ban.”**

By a lopsided bipartisan vote of 241-155 on February 27, the U.S. House of Representatives approved the Weldon-Stupak bill, which – like SB 185 and the Brownback-Landrieu bill – would ban any creation of human embryos by cloning. Arkansas Reps. Marion Berry (D), John Boozman (R), and Mike Ross (D) all voted to pass the ban. Rep. Vic Snyder (D) was absent.

In his January 28 State of the Union address, President Bush repeated his past calls for Congress to approve legislation to ban all human cloning. On February 26, the White House issued a statement strongly condemning the competing legislation that would allow cloning for research, saying, **“The Administration unequivocally is opposed to the cloning of human beings either for reproduction or for research. . . . The Administration is strongly opposed to any legislation that would prohibit human cloning for reproductive purposes but permit the creation of cloned embryos or development of human embryo farms for research, which would require the destruction of nascent human life.”** The White House statement is posted here:

[www.nrlc.org/killing\\_embryos/HR534HumanCloningProhibitionActSAP.pdf](http://www.nrlc.org/killing_embryos/HR534HumanCloningProhibitionActSAP.pdf)

The biotechnology industry lobby and some other supporters of human cloning have disseminated a great deal of misinformation regarding what the different pieces of cloning-related legislation would do, and this sometimes results in erroneous reporting on the issue. For a clear explanation of the difference between so-called “therapeutic cloning” and so-called “reproductive cloning,” and of the two radically different legislative approaches to human cloning, please see the paper “Human Cloning Legislation: Misconceptions and Realities,” which can be read or downloaded at the National Right to Life website at [www.nrlc.org/killing\\_embryos/index.html](http://www.nrlc.org/killing_embryos/index.html)