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Akin Calls for "Ethical, Effective Stem Cell Research"

**WASHINGTON, D.C.-** Congressman Todd Akin voted today in favor of effective adult and umbilical cord blood stem cell research and against embryo-destructive stem cell research.

“Adult and cord blood stem cell research does not necessitate destruction of human embryos for the purposes of scientific research, but it has been showing substantial promise in the actual treatment of disease.” said Akin, a member of the House Science Research Subcommittee.

“Embryos are persons at an early stage of development, and deserve the protection of law,” Akin continued. “Their size and shape does not diminish their personhood. Moreover, embryonic stem cell research has been shown to be not only ineffective but even damaging when implanted in laboratory animals. Thankfully, through adult and cord blood stem cell research, there clearly is an ethically uncontroversial and scientifically promising alternative.”

Akin joined with a bipartisan majority of his colleagues to pass H.R. 2520, legislation he cosponsored, that supports cord blood stem cell research. Cord blood stem cells are cells taken from discarded umbilical cords and placenta and have been producing promising results in research seeking treatment for debilitating and terminal diseases.

In addition to encouraging research, H.R. 2520 provides federal funding to increase the number of cord blood units available to match and treat patients who need them most. Cord blood stem cells are already treating thousands of patients with nearly 70 diseases, from Leukemia to Sickle Cell Anemia.

Akin also voted against HR 810, which calls for federal funding for research on stem cells taken from the destruction of embryos produced through in vitro fertilization. Although such research is legal, federal funding of embryonic stem cell research is currently limited to the stem cell lines created prior to 2001.

“The federal government should not create an incentive for the destruction of embryos by funding research that contradicts our allegiance to the belief that ‘the right to life’ is an inalienable right,” Akin said. “By funding research that involves the destruction of life at one stage of development, it is wholly possible that this legislation is a first step toward embracing a philosophy of eugenics that should be deeply troubling to all Americans.”