



*Pro-Life Activities*

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Final NIH guidelines “broader” than April 2009 proposal  
Parents donating embryos will not be informed of all options  
NIH review ignored tens of thousands of comments opposing the guidelines*

## **CARDINAL RIGALI CRITICIZES FINAL NIH GUIDELINES FOR DESTRUCTIVE STEM CELL RESEARCH**

WASHINGTON—Cardinal Justin Rigali, Chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, reacted today to final guidelines for human embryonic stem cell research issued yesterday by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The text of his statement follows:

“In April I criticized the NIH’s draft guidelines for destructive embryonic stem cell research, saying that under these guidelines ‘federal tax dollars will be used to encourage destruction of living embryonic human beings for stem cell research – including human beings who otherwise would have survived and been born.’

“The final guidelines issued yesterday are even broader. Parents who are asked to consider having their embryonic children destroyed for research will not even have to be informed about all their other options – only about the options that happen to be available at their particular fertility clinic. Moreover, under the final guidelines, stem cell lines that existed previously or that are produced in foreign countries may be made eligible for federally funded research even if they were obtained in ways that violate one or more of the NIH’s own informed consent requirements.

“The comments of tens of thousands of Americans opposing the destruction of innocent human life for stem cell research were simply ignored in this process. Even comments filed by the Catholic bishops’ conference and others against specific abuses in the draft guidelines were not addressed. For example, federally funded researchers will be allowed to insert

human embryonic stem cells into the embryos of animal species other than primates; federal grants will be available even to researchers who themselves destroyed human embryos to obtain the stem cells for their research. Existing federal law against funding research in which human embryos are harmed or destroyed is not given due respect here.

“This debate now shifts to Congress, where some members have said even this policy does not go far enough in treating some human beings as objects to be created, manipulated and destroyed for others’ use. I hope Americans concerned about this issue will write to their elected representatives, urging them not to codify or further expand this unethical policy.”

For more information about the USCCB’s “Oppose Destructive Stem Cell Research” campaign, visit [www.usccb.org/stemcellcampaign](http://www.usccb.org/stemcellcampaign). Cardinal Rigali’s April 21 statement on the draft guidelines is at [www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2009/09-087.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2009/09-087.shtml). The USCCB’s official comment letter of May 22 is at [www.usccb.org/prolife/NIHcomments.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/prolife/NIHcomments.pdf).

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Keywords: NIH guidelines, Cardinal Rigali, USCCB, U.S. Bishops, pro-life, human embryos, embryonic stem cell research, destructive stem cell research, informed consent, fertility clinic

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USCCB Pro-Life Secretariat