

March 7 Lobby Day Great Success

Over 1,000 people crowded the Capitol rotunda in Jefferson City on March 7 to attend a pro-life lobby day and rally. The focus of the lobby day was to support the Joint Resolution of the House and Senate, HJR 11 and SJR20, which would place on the next state-wide ballot an initiative to amend the state constitution essentially banning human cloning and restoring to the legislature the right to regulate the biotech industry. HJR 11 is sponsored by Rep. Jim Lembke (R. 85), and SJR 20 is sponsored by Sen. Matt Bartle (R. 8).

The noon-time rally, moderated by St. Louisan Steve Rupp, began with opening remarks and prayer from Archbishop Raymond Burke. Featured speakers were Dr. David Prentice, who also presented workshops throughout the day, Rep. Lembke, Senator Bartle, and Rep. Belinda Harris (D. 110), Chairman of the House Democrats for Life. Dr. Rick Scarborough of Vision America, who was very active throughout the state in opposition of Amendment 2, closed the rally with a call to action and prayer.

Sponsors of the Lobby Day and Rally, which included Missouri Right to Life, Missouri Catholic Conference, and Missourians Against Human Cloning, were pleased with the turnout and the enthusiasm of those attending.

The Joint Resolution is in response to the passage of Amendment 2 which enshrined in the Missouri Constitution the right to clone human embryos and destroy them for research purposes. The sponsors of this legislation point out that a 2005 McLaughlin poll showed that over 80% of Missourians oppose human cloning. Because of the intentionally deceptive ballot language, many who voted for Amendment 2 believed they were voting to ban all cloning when, in fact, the actual language created a constitutional right to create embryos via "somatic cell nuclear transfer," the universally-accepted scientific definition for cloning and the method used to clone Dolly the sheep.

The Joint Resolution would give Missouri voters the opportunity to close the loopholes to a complete ban on cloning that now exists in the constitution.

Since the House Joint Resolution is deadlocked in a House committee, Rep. Lembke has initiated a discharge petition requiring the signatures of 55 House members to pull the resolution out of committee and place it on the House calendar.

Voters are urged to call their Representatives and encourage them to sign the discharge petition for HJR 11. For more information and an up-to-date list of those who have signed the discharge petition, please see the Missouri Right to Life website at www.missourilife.org.