

# UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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May 26, 2009

Mr. Scott Fischbach  
Executive Director  
Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life  
4249 Nicollet Av.  
Minneapolis, MN 55409

Dear Mr. Fischbach:

I write today to go on record requesting that the MCCL remove false statements about the University of Minnesota from your website and communications materials. Further, I ask that you issue a retraction visible to your members and the community containing the truth about the research of the University of Minnesota's Stem Cell Institute.

In press releases dated May 18, 2009, and April 22, 2009, you state: "The University of Minnesota's Stem Cell Institute is believed to be pursuing human cloning for research purposes."

In addition, a March 2 press release quotes you as saying: "They are also shocked to discover that the University of Minnesota is seeking to create new human beings by cloning and harvest their stem cells, destroying them in the process."

These and other similar statements throughout your website and communications are absolutely false and, frankly, disinformation. To be very clear, the University of Minnesota is opposed to reproductive cloning and any cloning designed to produce a new human being. The University is not creating embryos for cloning, and the University's research policy prohibits reproductive cloning.

Your disinformation campaign jeopardizes therapeutic research which is life saving and necessary to identify treatments and cures in diabetes, cancer, heart disease and more. The culture of human cells is a common activity in biomedical research that has already resulted in life-saving treatments such as bone marrow transplant. Our stem cell research is at the core of much of the work taking place in regenerative medicine today. Whether it is the future promise of re-growing limbs for our returning injured veterans or developing new organs pioneered in our Center for Cardiovascular Repair that might one day replace the need for a heart transplant, our research is saving lives and improving health.

As you know, embryonic stem cells are derived from excess cells produced in fertility treatments, and if not used for research they would be destroyed.

Mr. Scott Fischbach  
May 26, 2009

Further, your characterization of our research is irresponsible. Stem cell research is regulated by stringent federal oversight, and is carried out within the strict guidelines of federal law and the National Institutes of Health. Within the University, our stem cell research is subject to research oversight from the Institutional Review Board, Institutional Biosafety Committee, and Embryonic Stem Cell Research Oversight Committee which approves research with embryonic stem cells. These committees have input from community members and ethicists and follow guidelines of the National Academies of Science.

Finally, I ask that in the future you commit to ensuring any information about the University is responsible and accurate. Should you need assistance in doing so, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wendy Burt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Wendy Burt  
Director of Public and Community Affairs  
Academic Health Center  
University of Minnesota