



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

As noted in the [annual report](#) of the Connecticut Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee, "An Act Permitting Stem Cell Research and Banning the Cloning of Human Beings" (the Act), was approved by the General Assembly and signed by Governor M. Jodi Rell on June 15, 2005. The Act appropriated a total of 100 million dollars over ten years for the purpose of grants-in-aid for conducting human embryonic or adult stem cell research. The Act has been codified at Connecticut General Statutes §§19a-32d through §19a-32g and §4-28e(c)(3).

Passage of the legislation positioned Connecticut as the third state in the nation in providing public funding in support of human embryonic and adult stem cell research. It mandated the establishment of the Connecticut [Stem Cell Research Advisory](#) and [Peer Review Committees](#) and required the Commissioner of Public Health as Chair of the Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee to convene the first meeting by December 1, 2005.

On November 21, 2006, with the support of Connecticut Innovations and the Department of Public Health, the Connecticut Stem Cell Research Advisory Committee directed the award of \$19.78 million in stem cell research funds to researchers from the University of Connecticut, Wesleyan University and Yale University.

During the second funding period, eighty-seven stem cell funding applications were accepted for consideration in November 2007. From December through February, the 14-member Connecticut Stem Cell Peer Review Committee reviewed these applications in accordance with National Institutes of Health guidelines and the National Academies' Guidelines for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and provided to the Advisory Committee its recommendations with respect to the scientific and ethical merits of each application. On April 1, 2008, Connecticut directed the allocation of \$9.84 million in stem cell research funds to investigators based in Storrs, Farmington, and New Haven. A press release is available at the following link: <http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?Q=412648&A=3294>

The Connecticut General Assembly recently adopted a legislative amendment from the Department of Public Health's Office of Research and Development entitled "An Act Concerning Stem Cell Research", available at the following: <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2008/ACT/PA/2008PA-00080-R00SB-00464-PA.htm> The legislative amendment is the direct result of discussions among participants of the IASCR, including California and the NAS.

This legislation makes three changes to Connecticut's existing stem cell legislation. Two of the changes facilitate the sharing of human embryonic stem cell research across both state and international borders and the third requires the establishment of a special review body for all human embryonic stem cell research in the state. This bill adds language requiring that the consent obtained for donations of embryos left after in vitro fertilization (IVF) comply with the requirements in the National Academies' Guidelines for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research. The lack of adequate donor consent could be a barrier to the sharing of human embryonic stem cell (hESC) lines developed in Connecticut as other jurisdictions will not approve research protocols on hESC lines developed without adequate consent. The bill also inserts language from the National Academies' Guidelines that allows the use in Connecticut of hESC lines such as those from the United Kingdom, Canada and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine that were developed under requirements that might differ slightly from Connecticut's but are sufficiently similar

as to be substantially equivalent. Finally, the bill adds a requirement that all human embryonic stem cell research conducted in Connecticut, regardless of the source of funding, must have such research overseen by an Embryonic Stem Cell Review Oversight (ESCRO) committee. The composition and responsibilities of an ESCRO committee are described in the National Academies' Guidelines and are adopted by this bill.

Plans are currently underway for StemCONN 09, a two day conference being held in New Haven, Connecticut on March 23-24, 2009, see attached link: <http://stemconn.org/>. IASCR participants may recall that the Alliance grew out of an interstate meeting convened in Connecticut during StemCONN 07, in Hartford on March 27, 2007. StemCONN 09 planners have requested feedback from the IASCR with respect to including a similar breakout session on interstate issues during next year's event.