

By Rep. Steve King

On August 16, 2008, at the Saddleback Civil Forum, Presidential candidate Barack Obama entered into a memorable exchange with Pastor Rick Warren.

Pastor Warren: Now, let's deal with abortion; 40 million abortions since Roe v. Wade. As a pastor, I have to deal with this all of the time, all of the pain and all of the conflicts. I know this is a very complex issue. Forty million abortions, at what point does a baby get human rights, in your view?

Senator Obama: Well, you know, I think that whether you're looking at it from a theological perspective or a scientific perspective, answering that question with specificity, you know, is above my pay grade.

With newfound moral clarity, Obama decided last week that the question of when human life begins is no longer above his pay grade. Obama's executive order rescinding the Bush stem cell policy, which limited federal funding for stem cell research that requires the harm or destruction of human embryos, showed no respect for the conscientious objections of life-loving, tax-paying Americans.

With Obama's move, all taxpayers will have to pay to take the life of, and experiment with the tissue of, innocent human embryos. I and millions of pro-life Americans object, Mr. President.

I have held babies in my arms who had been frozen embryos for as long as nine years. They giggle, cuddle, laugh, play and love. They are as much a human being as any of us.

To date, over 200 formerly frozen embryos have been adopted by families. These "snowflake babies" are giggling, screaming, playful children. It is a glorious miracle for couples who imagined they would never experience parenthood, much less pregnancy and childbirth. Their parents do not think frozen embryos are medical waste.

And yet, that's what Obama and proponents of life-destroying stem cell research would have you believe about the embryos in question. Embryonic stem cell research requires the killing of thousands of embryos -- persons at the beginning stage of life.

Supporters of embryonic stem cell research will not take a position on when life begins. If they did, they could not sustain their argument, because they know their research requires the killing of one human life for the possibility to helping others.

I believe we have a moral obligation to pursue treatments and cures for people with devastating ailments, which is why I am a strong supporter of scientifically sound, ethical stem cell research. What you will not hear Obama or liberals in Congress discuss is the absolute fact that other forms of stem cell research are resulting in treatments for people who suffer from debilitating diseases.

Recent research now allows a scientist to derive pluripotent stem cells through the reprogramming of regular skin cells. These cells are functionally the same as embryonic stem cells and hold the same research potential as stem cells from embryos, without the life-destructing effects of embryonic stem cell research.

Adult stem cells, which are extracted from umbilical cord blood, placenta, bone marrow, nasal mucosa, hair follicles and fat cells, are today successfully used in treating real people who suffer from Parkinson's Disease, Crohn's Disease, diabetes, spinal cord injury, strokes, arthritis, and numerous cancers, including breast, brain and leukemia.

And yet, this cutting-edge, life-saving ethical research is overshadowed by the radical agenda of America's most pro-abortion President and a complicit media, all in the name of "progress." But what kind of progress does embryonic stem cell research really bring about?

The American medical community has many times refused the results of critical research because the findings were achieved unethically. International standards for Permissible Medical Experiments are clear. The subject must be a volunteer, there must be no alternative, results of animal experimentation must have been proven successful, the subject must be able to voluntarily end the experiment, there must be no possibility of injury, disability, or death, and the promise must outweigh the risk.

Embryonic stem cell research violates each of these principles in a manner reminiscent of experiments at Nuremberg. It is morally wrong to destroy human life for the purpose of research.

Proponents of embryonic stem cell research like Obama say they cannot look a paraplegic in the eye and say “We can’t experiment on frozen embryos.”

I would ask our President to visit a family with a snowflake baby, hold that precious child in his hands and still say, “I wish we had.”