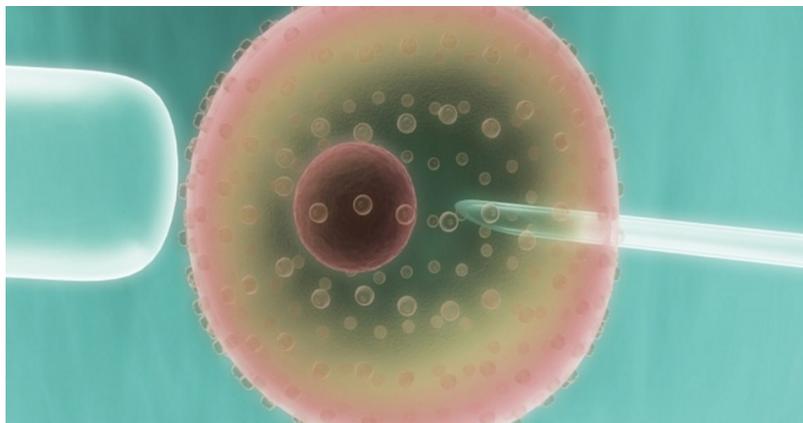




Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on January 9, 2013

Supreme Court Won't Halt Federal Funding of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear a lawsuit challenging the federal funding of embryonic stem cell research (ESCR), which pro-life leaders charge destroys human life. Two scientists had filed suit against the government, arguing that the funding, resumed by President Obama through executive order after the Bush Administration's long-term ban on the funding, violates the 1996 Dickey-Wicker Amendment, which bars federal funding of research "in which a human embryo or embryos are destroyed, discarded, or knowingly subjected to risk of injury or death."



[LifeNews.com](#) reported that in August 2010, "U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth ruled that Obama's executive order likely violates the law against federal funding of embryo destruction." But, in April 2011, a three-judge panel of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that Obama could resume funding of the research. That decision prompted a dismissal of the suit by Lamberth, who said he had no other option given the appeals court ruling.

In August of this year, the D.C. Appeals court upheld that dismissal, siding with the earlier ruling of the three-judge panel that the Dickey-Wicker Amendment is ambiguous, and could be interpreted to ban the use of the initial embryonic stem cells, but not the subsequent cells derived from the stem cells. "Under that interpretation," wrote the appeals court in its August 24 ruling, "Dickey-Wicker permits federal funding of research projects that utilize already-derived ESCs — which are not themselves embryos — because no 'human embryo or embryos are destroyed' in such projects."

The U.S. Supreme Court refused to take up the case, letting stand the appeals court ruling.

Pro-life and conservative Christian groups reacted strongly to the High Court's decision. "Americans should not be forced to pay for experiments that destroy human life, have produced no real-world treatments, and violate federal law," said Steven H. Aden of [Alliance Defending Freedom](#), which had helped to represent the two scientists who filed the suit. Aden noted that "Congress designed a law to ensure that Americans don't pay any more precious taxpayer dollars for needless research made irrelevant by adult stem cell and other research. That law is clear, and we had hoped the U.S. Supreme Court would uphold its clear intent."

David Prentice, a senior fellow for life sciences at the [Family Research Council](#), said that "federal funding of embryonic stem cell research is a tragic waste of lives as well as taxpayer money, since despite the promises made to gain the federal funding, there is not a single example of a successful treatment."

Samuel Casey of the Jubilee Campaign's [Law of Life Project](#) noted that the Supreme Court's refusal



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“dangerously allows the president’s executive order to trump statutes....” He added that as a consequence, “the American people are now strapped with having to pay millions of dollars for embryonic stem cell research which has not yet given us a single therapeutic cure and which offends the conscience of at least half if not more of Americans who do not want to see their research dollars used to kill one human being in order to hopefully find some cure for another one.”



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