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Details: Misc email and newspaper column

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2007-08

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Campaign Finance Reform, Rural Issues, and Information Technology (SC-CFRRIT)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

Daggs, Kathy

From: Trevor Summerfield [tsummerfield@campaignfreedom.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2008 12:32 PM
To: Daggs, Kathy
Subject: Center for Competitive Politics Statement
Attachments: Center for Competitive Politics Wisconsin Senate Statement 2-12-2008.pdf

Kathy,

As promised, I have attached a statement for the record CCP's President Sean Parnell would like the Committee to look at and consider as they move forward with debate on campaign finance reform.

All the best,

Trevor Summerfield
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GUEST COLUMN

2-11-08

Governor's speech misses mark on stem-cell innovation

By WILLIAM BENEDICT

As a senior citizen of the state of Wisconsin whose family suffers from three serious cell-based diseases and who has been working with both private and public officials in support of public funding for stem cell research in Wisconsin, I was deeply disappointed when my governor in his State of the State address looked our legislators and the citizens of Wisconsin in the eye and boasted that Wisconsin has stayed at the forefront of stem-cell innovation "because we kept politicians out of it."

I have to assume the "we" he was referring to are the citizens of Wisconsin. Or did the "we" refer to his administration? In either case, I predict taxpayers and the health consumers of this state soon will deeply regret that the people and their representatives acquiesced and remained disengaged while the most critical health policy issues were left unaddressed.

How can the citizens of this state and our policy makers remain disengaged around a human health concern having to do with the essence of life itself?

If not us — the citizens through our Legislature — then who will decide? While I support our free marketplace and the critical role that private enterprise must play if Wisconsin's stem cell program is to succeed, I am not about to support anyone who advocates that citizens and their policy makers withdraw from the public square on this or any other vital public issue.

As much as I admire James Thomson and his team of talented and dedicated scientists, neither they nor the UW research community nor the biotech/pharmaceutical industry can be left to mind the people's business relating to how best to fund stem cell research and to ensure that the needs and interests of taxpayers and future health consumers of this state are fairly



Benedict

represented.

The media are trying to distract us from this issue by framing it primarily as an economic answer to all our problems. They would prefer that citizens see the chief public benefit in terms of the trickle-down economic effect and the promise of future job creation.

While this benefit is worthy, it is far too narrow and short-sighted.

Further allocation of public tax incentives and innovation grants must be accompanied with accountability and public benefit requirements, including intellectual property rights, public disclosure and conflict of interest safeguards.

To continue to focus primarily on job creation outcomes and ignore the state's present health care crisis is short-sighted and irresponsible.

Now is the time for our policy makers to decide whether the miracle cures promised will be made accessible and affordable to Wisconsin families with cell-based diseases.

The answer to this question must be reflected in the language of the state's financial and tax research innovation incentives now being proposed.

Asking the grantees to do the right thing after giving away the farm is like asking the fox to cough up the chickens after giving him the key to the hen house.

If Wisconsin truly is to remain at the forefront in its stem cell initiative, like California and many other states, we will set about immediately to fill the policy gaps referred to above.

Without legislative leadership we should not expect that cell-based therapies and drugs derived from this research will eventually benefit all of us as health consumers and taxpayers.

I hope a year from now, when our governor again gives his State of the State address, he will be able to thank your legislators and mine for building a policy platform that will match the genius of our science and will ensure Wisconsin's stem cell program remains at the forefront of both health care policy innovation.

Benedict is a retired social worker who lives in Madison.