

Wisconsin lawmakers consider cloning ban

Wisconsin reportedly is considering a ban on cloning that critics say would undermine embryonic stem cell research in the state where it was discovered.

The bill, passed 59-38 in the state Assembly and awaiting a Senate vote, would prohibit reproductive cloning, or creating a baby that is a genetic carbon copy of an individual -- a concept few scientists support, the Chicago Tribune reported Tuesday.

The proposed law would also outlaw a procedure called therapeutic cloning, which involves using lab techniques to create early embryos containing a trait scientists want to study. Such procedures are performed when scientists need a supply of embryonic stem cells for research in developing treatments for genetic diseases.

Supporters of the bill are opposed to destruction of human embryos. Anyone violating the proposed law would be subject to a maximum of 10 years in prison.

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle has threatened to veto the proposal if the state Senate approves the measure.

Embryonic stem cells were first isolated at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1988.

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