

STEM CELL POLICY FLAWED

Back in March, President Barack Obama lifted restrictions on federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. The president expressed his concern about the “perils” of such research and asked the National Institutes of Health to draft requirements so that only ethically obtained stem cell lines would receive taxpayer money. The final rules were announced and went into effect in July.

In a statement, the president said: “In order to ensure that all federally funded human stem cell research is conducted according to these same principles and to promote a uniform Federal policy across the executive branch, I hereby direct the heads of executive departments and agencies that support and conduct stem cell research to adopt these Guidelines, to the fullest extent practicable in light of legal authorities and obligations.”

While provisions such as informed consent are welcome, the bottom line is that the central issue of protection of human life was ignored.

President Obama and other supporters of embryonic stem cell research hide behind ethical requirements to justify using tax dollars for destroying nascent human life. Such guidelines beg the question: if there is no moral dimension to destroying human embryos, why is there a need for ethics rules? While the answer is obvious to people who understand that life begins at conception, advocates of embryo destruction give lip service to ethics while simultaneously pretending that there is no moral issue. The fact of the matter is these requirements are a distraction from the larger issue of the legal destruction of innocent human life.

In Pope Benedict XVI’s latest encyclical, *Charity in Truth*, he says “there is a lack of respect for the right to life...if

human embryos are sacrificed to research....” Too bad the president ignored these words when the two met on July 10.