



Georgia Bio
Stem Cell Research Position Statement
Adopted May 11, 2006, by the Board of Directors

The discovery of stem cells and research into how these cells differentiate into all the specific cells of the body is among the most significant scientific and medical breakthrough in the past decade. This research has the potential to positively affect the lives of millions of Americans by leading to new treatments and cures for many of humanity's most devastating conditions, such as heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, diabetes, kidney failure, and paralysis.

Georgia Bio supports the right of scientists in Georgia to have access to legally and ethically derived forms of human stem cells, including adult and embryonic stem cells, from legally and ethically approved sources, including donor tissue, cord blood and somatic cell nuclear transplantation or therapeutic cloning.

Georgia Bio strongly opposes reproductive cloning to create a human being. We support therapeutic cloning as a research technology that enables scientists to grow new stem cells and to clone human cells, genes and other tissues in their efforts to understand and create life-saving treatments for diseases. The National Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health attest to the scientific value of this technology and of stem cell research. In addition, this research is widely accepted throughout our nation by ethicists and political leaders, Republicans and Democrats, representing a broad spectrum of views.

Georgia Bio opposes any effort to ban and criminalize therapeutic cloning and stem cell research. The life sciences industry in Georgia has invested hundreds of millions of dollars to support advanced research and commercialization of new, life saving medicines. These investments have contributed significantly to Georgia's reputation as a state of innovation and as an international center of excellence for biomedical research and development. The state of Georgia has identified life sciences as the top strategic industry for economic growth. Criminalization of research accepted by the federal government and the vast majority of U.S. states would jeopardize Georgia's reputation as a state of innovation and would run counter to the state's economic development policies.

Georgia Bio recognizes that significant ethical issues are raised about therapeutic cloning and human embryonic stem cell research, and we support use of this research under an appropriate system of regulatory and ethical oversight. We respect the views of those who oppose such research, including some in our own life sciences community. However, we are persuaded otherwise by what we believe is an overriding consideration, namely, that it would be tragic to lose the unique potential for alleviating human suffering of millions of patients in desperate need of medical advances afforded by studying stem cells.

Georgia Bio, founded in 1989, represents the life sciences industry in Georgia. Our members total 300 companies, institutions and universities, government groups, corporate service providers, and other organizations involved in the research and development of healthcare, agricultural, industrial and environmental products.