Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your bold, consistent efforts to protect the sanctity of all human life, particularly for the youngest and most vulnerable. We welcomed your much-anticipated June 2019 decision to stop taxpayer funding for intramural federal research using aborted baby body parts, such as livers, hearts, and brains, for experiments. Likewise, we appreciate that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is standing up an ethics board to review federally funded extramural fetal tissue research projects. Your Administration's decisive actions to protect human life and human dignity on every front have brought great hope to our nation.

In the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, complaints against your decision to halt funding of aborted fetal tissue research has reached a crescendo. Some critics have suggested that the current policies protecting the dignity of children who met an untimely death could affect millions of lives,[1] and other comments indicate that the ethical parameters around fetal tissue research severely limit exploratory cures of the coronavirus.[2] These critical litanies, however, repeat false claims and narratives which for many years have touted the utility of aborted fetal tissue in research, including the claim that aborted fetal tissue has been used to create many vaccines.

Aborted fetal tissue from ongoing abortions, however, has never been used in production of a single vaccine. While a few old cell lines derived from abortion in the 1960's and 1970's continues to be used for a small handful of vaccines, most vaccines today use more efficient, modern cell lines and production techniques. Likewise, the few attempted transplants of aborted fetal tissue have resulted in making most patients worse, not better.[3] The focus of the current

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[1] Charlotte Lozier Institute, Don't Listen to Doomsayers on Trump's Fetal Tissue Research Ban, *CNSNews.com*, February 14, 2020; https://cnsnews.com/commentary/charlotte-lozier-institute/dont-listen-doomsayers-trumps-fetal-tissue-research-ban

[2] Amy Goldstein, Trump Ban on Fetal Tissue Research Blocks Coronavirus Treatment Effort, *Washington Post*, March 18, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/trump-banon-fetal-tissue-research-blocks-coronavirus-treatment-effort/2020/03/18/ddd9f754-685c-11eaabef-020f086a3fab_story.html

[3] Freed CR et al., Transplantation of embryonic dopamine neurons for severe parkinson's disease, N Engl J Med 344, 710, 2001
Gina Kolata, "Parkinson's Research Is Set Back by Failure of Fetal Cell Implants," New York Times March 8, 2001; accessed at: http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/08/health/08PARK.html

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appeals for taxpayer money to buy fetal tissue is the supposed necessity of using aborted baby body parts to construct humanized mice to test drugs. Yet, this antiquated technology has been surpassed by a plethora of modern, ethical techniques, as has been thoroughly described and cited in Congressional testimony.[4] There is no urgent, scientific need for aborted fetal tissue.

These attempts to exploit the serious crisis our nation faces undermine the promising research already underway.[5] In reality, holding the line ethically gives us the ability to put resources toward better, more promising science that is already showing potential against the COVID-19 coronavirus. Here are just a few examples of the dozens of possibilities.

- A different type of humanized mouse – which does not use aborted baby organs – already exists, and is proven as a research model for coronavirus infection and for testing potential treatments.[6] Another example of a modern, non-fetal tissue, humanized mouse, the *Velocimmune* mouse, is genetically engineered to produce human antibodies that can be used therapeutically, potentially against the current strain of coronavirus.[7]
- Repurposing already-approved drugs also shows potential in treating COVID-19 coronavirus patients.
- Adult stem cells – derived without destroying embryos and without abortion – are also showing great potential. One type of human adult stem cell has been shown to generate new lung tissue and heal damaged lungs, essential for repair of lungs damaged by respiratory viruses.[8] Initial published results using another type of adult stem cell (termed Mesenchymal Stem Cells) showed improved health for patients suffering from COVID-19-induced pneumonia.[9]

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[4] Tara Sander Lee, Ph.D., Written testimony "In Support of Ethical Alternatives to Aborted Fetal Tissue Research," Invited Scientific Testimony. Joint Hearing, Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules and Subcommittee on Government Operations, House Oversight & Government Reform Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, December 13, 2018; https://lozierinstitute.org/written-testimony-of-tara-sander-lee-ph-d-in-support-of-ethical-alternatives-to-aborted-fetal-tissue-research/ **AND** David A. Prentice, "Exploring Alternatives to Fetal Tissue Research" Invited Scientific Testimony. Joint Hearing, Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules and Subcommittee on Government Operations, House Oversight & Government Reform Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, December 13, 2018; https://lozierinstitute.org/written-testimony-of-david-a-prentice-ph-d-in-support-of-ethical-alternatives-to-aborted-fetal-tissue-research/

[5] David A Prentice and Tara Sander Lee, Exploiting a Crisis: Unethical Experiments Undermine Real Help for Coronavirus Patients, *Townhall*, March 26, 2020; https://townhall.com/columnists/davidaprentice/2020/03/26/exploiting-a-crisis-unethical-experiments-undermine-real-help-for-coronavirus-patients-n2565761

[6] Qiming Wang, hACE2 transgenic mouse model for coronavirus (COVID-19) research, *The Jackson Laboratory*, February 24, 2020; https://www.jax.org/news-and-insights/2020/february/introducing-mouse-model-for-corona-virus

[7] Regeneron identifies several antibodies against Covid-19, *Pharmaceutical Technology,* March 18, 2020; https://www.pharmaceutical-technology.com/news/regeneron-covid-19-antibodies/

[8] University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, New-found stem cell helps regenerate lung tissue after acute injury, *ScienceDaily*, February 28, 2018; https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/02/180228131106.htm

[9] Zikuan Leng *et al.*, Transplantation of ACE2- Mesenchymal Stem Cells Improves the Outcome of Patients with COVID-19 Pneumonia, *Aging and Disease* 11, 216-228, March 13, 2020; doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.14336/AD.2020.0228

Thank you, Mr. President, for your decision to halt the grisly practice of using aborted babies for experiments. We urge you to maintain your current fetal tissue research policy and to redirect funds toward ethical, successful alternatives to combat COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Kevin McCarthy
Member of Congress

Steve Scalise
Member of Congress

Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

Ralph Abraham, M.D.
Member of Congress

Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

Rick W. Allen
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Kelly Armstrong
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Jodey C. Arrington
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Brian Babin, D.D.S.
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Jim Banks
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Jim Baird
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Andy Barr
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Andy Biggs
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Ken Buck
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Ted Budd
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Tim Burchett
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Michael C. Burgess, M.D.
Member of Congress

Bradley Byrne
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Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress

Steve Chabot
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Ben Cline
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Tom Cole
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Doug Collins
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James Comer
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Matt Gaetz
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Sam Graves
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Bill Johnson
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Dusty Johnson
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Jim Jordan
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Fred Keller
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Trent Kelly
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Mike Kelly
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Steve King
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David Kustoff
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Darin LaHood
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Robert E. Latta
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Debbie Lesko
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Billy Long
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Barry Loudermilk
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Patrick McHenry
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Ann Wagner
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Tim Walberg
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Mark Walker
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Jackie Walorski
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Michael Waltz
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Steve Watkins
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Brad R. Wenstrup
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Bruce Westerman
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Roger Williams
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Joe Wilson
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Ron Wright
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