overlay to the debate. This is not about embryos and embryos coming out of stem cells. There is not any such thing.

The Weldon-Stupak bill goes in another direction. It actually places an outright ban on this critical work, and it makes the research that could cure some of these diseases even illegal.

Are we going to take these great American heroes, and in fact, Dr. O'Connor from my district, and throw him in jail? I think not. I think that is going too far. It is unconscionable for us not to continue to be the merchants of hope in terms of the business that we are in.

So I think we need to support the GREENWOOD-DEUTSCH approach and throw out the other. It is a march to folly.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN).

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

The letter here is from the Association of American Medical Colleges, more than 100 fine medical schools. They back the Deutsch-Greenwood bill for the bipartisan effort that it has made.

Let me just cite a few things: ''As such, we want to urge Mr. GREENWOOD to reject the approach embodied'' in the other form here, and ''we agree with the American public that the cloning of human beings should not proceed.''

According to the National Institutes of Health, somatic cell nuclear transfer technology could provide an invaluable approach on which to study how cells become specialized.

I cited some of those earlier, with Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease, brain and spinal cord. But there are other types of specialized cells that could be created to create skin grafts for burn victims, bone marrow, stem cells to treat leukemia and other blood diseases; nerve stem cells to treat many of the diseases such as multiple sclerosis and Lou Gehrig's disease, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and to repair spinal cord injury; muscle cell precursors, to treat muscular dystrophy and heart disease.

Mr. Speaker, the president, Jordan J. Cohen, of the Association of American Medical Colleges, says, ''We will never see the fulfillment of any of these promising areas if we choose to take the perilous path of banning outright the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer technology through legislation.''

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the letter from Dr. Cohen.

The letter referred to is as follows:

Hon. JIM GREENWOOD,

House of Representatives, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE GREENWOOD: The current opportunities in medical research are unparalleled in our nation's history. To help ensure the fulfillment of thee opportunities, the Association of American Medical Colleges urges Congress to oppose legislation that would prohibit the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer. Such a blanket prohibition would have grave implications for future advances in medical research and human healing.

As such, we urge you to reject the approach embodied in H.R. 2505, the ''Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2001.'' H.R. 2505 would have a chilling effect on vital areas of research that could prove to be of enormous public benefit. Instead, we urge you to adopt the approach taken in H.R. 2608, the ''Cloning Prohibition Act of 2001,'' introduced by Representatives Jim Greenwood (R-Pa.) and Peter Deutsch (D-Fla.). This bill would permit potentially life-saving research to continue, but prohibit the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer ''to initiate a pregnancy or with the intent to initiate a pregnancy.''

We agree with the American public that the cloning of human beings should not proceed. However, it is important to recognize the difference between reproductive cloning and the use of cloning technology that does not create a human being. Non-reproductive cloning technology has potentially important applications in research, medicine and industry, including genetically engineered human cell cultures that would serve as ''therapeutic tissues'' in the treatment of currently intractable human diseases. These uses of somatic cell nuclear transfer technology do not lead to a cloned human being.

According to the National Institutes of Health, somatic cell nuclear transfer technology could provide an invaluable approach by which to study how cells become specialized, which in turn could provide new understanding of the mechanisms that lead to the development of the abnormal cells responsible for cancers and certain birth defects. Improved understanding of cell specialization may also provide answers to how cells age or are regulated—leading to new insights into the treatment or cure of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, or other incapacitating degenerative disease of the brain and spinal cord. The technology might also help us understand how to activate certain genes to permit the creation of customized cells for transplantation or grafting. Such cells would be * * * could therefore be transplanted into that donor without fear of immune rejection, the major biological barrier to organ and tissue transplantation at this time.

Other types of specialized cells could be created to enable skin grafts for burn victims; bone marrow stem cells to treat leukemia and other blood diseases; nerve stem cells to threat neurodegenerative diseases such as multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, and to repair spinal cord injuries; muscle cell precursors to treat muscular dystrophy and heart disease; and cartilage-forming cells to reconstruct joints damaged by injury or arthritis. Somatic cell nuclear transfer technology could also be used potentially to accomplish remarkable increases in the efficiency and efficacy of gene therapy by permitting the creation of pure populations of genetically ''corrected'' cells that could then be delivered back into the patient, again with no risk of immune rejection. Indeed, this technology could well lead to the operationalization of gene therapy as a practicable and effective therapeutic modality—a goal which to date has proved elusive.

We will never see the fulfillment of any of these promising areas if we choose to take the perilous path of banning outright the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer technology through legislation. Thus, the AAMC respectfully urges the Congress to reject H.R. 2505 and adopt H.R. 2608. We thank you for your consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,

JORDAN J. COHEN, M.D.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Let me note that I believe the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) has injected what I really believe to be a straw man argument when he suggests the issue of insoulment is part of this debate. It is not relevant. We are not talking about insoulment. The real issue before us is the simple but highly profound issue of whether or not it will be legally permissible to create human life for research purposes.

Mr. Speaker, human cloning, if it is not already here, it is certainly on the fast track. It is not a matter of if, it is a matter of when. It seems to me we have to make sure that these newly created human beings are not created for the purpose of exploitation, abuse, and destructive experimentation.

Human life, Mr. Speaker, can survive a few days, a few minutes, a few seconds, a few weeks, a few months, a few years, perhaps to old age. We need to understand and understand the profound truth that life is a continuum.

Earlier in the debate, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) stated that the scientists would simply stop the process, stop the process. Think about those words. What does that mean, stop the process? Stop that human life. That is what we are talking about.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the debate we had some years back in 1996 when some of our colleagues stood up and pounded the tables before them and said, and this is the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), ''We should not be involved in the creation of embryos for research. I completely agree with my colleagues on that score.''

I remember that debate. I was here, as were some of my other colleagues. Everyone said they were against the creation of human embryos for human research.

Today, Member after Member gets up and says, I am against human cloning. As I said before, just because we say we are does not mean that we really are.

The only bill that stops human cloning is the Weldon-Stupak bill. I would respectfully say the bill that is offered by my friend and colleague from Pennsylvania will do nothing of the kind. It will perhaps stop some implantation but will not stop human cloning. We must vote for the underlying bill.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Let me note that I believe the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) has injected what I really believe to be a straw man argument when he suggests the issue of insoulment is part of this debate. It is not relevant. We are not talking about insoulment. The real issue before us is the simple but highly profound issue of whether or not it will be legally permissible to create human life for research purposes.