March 15, 2016

Chairman Robert Aderholt
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
Rayburn House Office Building 2362-A
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt,

Thank you for your leadership in including your embryo protection provision in last year’s Agriculture Appropriations bill.

As you know, your provision prevents funding from being used by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve applications in which a human embryo is intentionally created or modified to include a heritable genetic modification. As you draft the Fiscal Year 2017 Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you retain as bill text the pro-life limitation provision related to protecting human embryos, included in Section 749 the General Provisions of Title VII of Division A of the FY16 omnibus.

The enactment of your provision proved to be particularly timely after the Institute of Medicine (IOM) issued a report in February 2016 recommending that the FDA approve “3-parent” embryo technology for experiments. “3-parent” embryos represent one kind of heritable genetic modification. Advocates for the technology argue that it is a way to create children who do not carry mitochondrial disease, a genetic disorder inherited through the mother.

As you well know, a new technology called CRISPR has made it easier for scientists to genetically manipulate human embryos and reproductive cells (known as germ cells). They can potentially make genetic changes to DNA that are passed down to future generations with unknown and possible unintended consequences.

We all share the desire to prevent illness and suffering, but the proposed techniques do not treat existing individuals. Instead, they create new human life with manipulated genetic composition. They treat new individuals as experiments, creating serious safety concerns. In many cases, the experiments even destroy the human embryos.
Fortunately, the provision has prevented the FDA from approving the creation of “3-parent” embryos and other technologies that genetically manipulate human embryos. We believe that it is crucial to continue to extend this protection to the youngest members of the human family. We should wisely continue to keep this prohibition in place in FY17.

Thank you for your foresight and commitment to protecting this important life-affirming policy.

Sincerely,

Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Earl L. “Buddy” Carter
Member of Congress

Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress

Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress

Brian Babin
Member of Congress

Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress

Steve King
Member of Congress

Pete Olson
Member of Congress

Rob Bishop
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Glenn Grothman
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Jeff Miller
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Glenn ‘GT’ Thompson
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Vicky Hartzler
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John Fleming, M.D.
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John Moolenaar
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Mark Walker
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Dan Benishek  
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Barry Loudermilk  
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Bob Goodlatte  
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Jim Jordan  
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Marsha Blackburn  
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Gus Bilirakis  
Member of Congress

Kevin Brady  
Member of Congress