

# Committee fails to ban human cloning

**By George P. Matysek Jr.**

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Nancy Fortier Paltell, associate director for the respect life office of the Maryland Catholic Conference, said she was “disgusted” by the Maryland Senate Finance Committee’s rejection of a bill to ban human cloning.

In an 8-3 vote March 26, the committee killed the Human Cloning Prohibition Act of 2007, sponsored by Sen. Roy Dyson of Southern Maryland.

Last year, the Maryland General Assembly approved a bill that defined human cloning as allowing a cloned embryo to develop past the embryonic stage. Current law allows growing cloned embryos through the first eight weeks of development but requires their destruction before they reach the fetal stage.

The Human Cloning Prohibition Act would have completely prohibited the asexual creation of human embryos through cloning.

“The legislature refuses to accept the scientific definition of cloning,” said Ms. Paltell. “Creating life for the purpose of killing it in science experiments is wrong.”

Most Marylanders strongly support a ban on human cloning, according to Ms. Paltell. She pointed to a 2005 poll by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research, Inc. that found 79 percent of registered voters polled said scientists should not be allowed to use human cloning to create a supply of human embryos to be destroyed in medical research.

“I think we have to keep up the fight,” said Ms. Paltell. “We’ll be back next year.”

The following members of the Senate Finance Committee voted in favor of banning human cloning:

George C. Edwards, Allan H. Kittleman and E.J. Pipkin

The following members of the Senate Finance Committee voted against banning human cloning:

Thomas M. Middleton, John C. Astle, George W. Della Jr., Nathaniel Exum, Robert J. Garagiola, Delores G. Kelley, Katherine A. Klausmeier and Catherine E. Pugh