

# **Philadelphia cardinal praises proposed human-animal hybrid ban**

WASHINGTON – Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, praised legislation introduced in the House in late April that would ban the creation of human-animal embryos for research.

The cardinal said he welcomed the ban as “an opportunity to rein in an egregious and disturbing misuse of technology to undermine human dignity.”

The Human-Animal Hybrid Prohibition Act was introduced in the House April 24 by Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J. Identical legislation was introduced in the Senate last fall by Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan.

“I commend Sen. Brownback and Rep. Smith for their leadership in seeking to prohibit the creation of human-animal hybrids,” said Cardinal Rigali in an April 30 statement.

“While this subject may seem like science fiction to many, the threat is all too real,” he added, noting that England is preparing to authorize the production of cloned human embryos using human DNA and animal eggs, setting the stage for the creation of embryos that are half-human and half-animal.

The cardinal said U.S. researchers have already boasted of plans to implant a combination of mouse cells and human embryos into female mice and to insert human brain cells into a mouse.

“The alleged promise of embryonic stem cells has already been used in attempts to justify destroying human embryos, and even to justify creating them solely for destructive research,” Cardinal Rigali said. “Now, the same utilitarian argument is being used to justify an especially troubling form of genetic manipulation, to create partly human creatures as mere objects for research or commercial use.”

The cardinal added that the human-animal hybrid procedure not only “radically undermines human dignity” but makes it “impossible to determine what is human

and what is not.”

He encouraged members of Congress to co-sponsor the legislation “while there is still time for sound ethics and policy to place some restraints on the misuse of science.”