

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2015**

**MPs should reject three-parent embryos, says LIFE**

The national pro-life charity LIFE is calling on MPs to oppose the legalisation of mitochondrial donation, or three-parent IVF+ as MPs prepare to debate the issue in the House of Commons tomorrow Tuesday 3rd February. The government has climbed down on its original plan that the new regulations would only be debated in an obscure committee rather than by the full House of Commons.

There are significant ethical problems involved. The destruction of embryos is integral to one of the techniques under discussion . pro-nuclear transfer . and research on embryos has been used to establish the viability of maternal spindle transfer. Then there is the fundamentally eugenic idea behind mitochondrial donation . that we should not simply accept human beings as valuable individuals in their own right, but that we should only welcome them conditionally, if they are healthy, and discard those who are not healthy. This idea is wrong and must be rejected outright.

Despite the reassurances offered by government and the health establishment, there are still big problems with safety and effectiveness. We don't know for sure that these techniques will work, and we don't know for sure that they won't have serious ill consequences. Supporters say that there must always be a first time that a therapy is used in humans; that is true, but in this case barely any of the normal preparatory tests have been done. The requirement that mitochondrial donation is shown to be safe and effective in non-human primates has been dropped. Several of what the HFEA calls 'critical tests'+ have either not been met, or have only been investigated with a few studies, or have yielded only inconclusive results. Members of the HFEA Expert Panel themselves admit that there are 'few data'+regarding certain key questions.

In the long-term, alterations to the human germline may have enormous health consequences, but there has been little discussion of how those born from these techniques are to be monitored.

**END**

**For further media comment please call the LIFE Media Hotline on 07867 744502**

**LIFE is a pro-life charity that supports anyone facing a crisis pregnancy, pregnancy loss or after an abortion, and strives to engage, inspire and inform the next generation.**