

ANNE MILTON MP
Member of Parliament
for Guildford



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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

St Joseph's Church, Justice and Peace Org

AM/GH

29 October 2008

Dear Anne

I know that you have contacted me in the past about the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill and I wanted to update you on what happened at Third Reading in the Commons last week.

I know that there has been a great deal of concern about this Bill and in particular the subject of abortion. At the Third Reading, the new clauses in relation to abortion were placed last on the list, behind amendments on embryo research, and as a result there was no time to debate these.

There were several significant votes to the Bill, which I will run through:

- The first vote was to establish the proceedings of the debate. I voted against this as it put abortion amendments to the back of the queue. Unfortunately, I was in the minority and this amendment was defeated.
- The next amendment sought to limit the types of techniques that could be used if regulations were passed allowing for alteration of a cell which I voted for. The amendment was not passed.
- There were three amendments on embryo research. I voted for the amendment that prevented the use of eggs or embryos that have been genetically altered in assisted reproduction. I also voted to ensure that a type of animal/human hybrid embryo not specifically detailed in the Bill is regulated by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). There was also an amendment on prohibiting placing human sperm or eggs in an animal which I voted for. None of these amendments were passed.
- The last vote was essentially to establish whether the Bill would proceed to the third reading and be passed with amendments made. I voted against the Third Reading and in effect against the Bill. Although the Human Fertilization and Embryology Act of 1990 needs updating and replacing, I was uncomfortable with voting for the Bill as it stood. Again I was in the minority and the Bill was passed.

This very sensitive issue was subject to free votes on our side of the House.

Thank you again for contacting me.

My best wishes,

Anne Milton
Member of Parliament
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I will treat as confidential all personal information you give to me or my staff. I may need to pass on this information to others so they can help you. I undertake to handle the information you give me in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. I may wish to email or write to you in the future, to keep you informed on the same or associated issues. Please let me know if you do not wish to be kept up to date in this way.