

Questions for Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative

1. Welcome to *Stem Cell World*.
2. Whose idea was Proposition 71?
3. What is its full official title?
4. How long did it take to qualify it for the ballot?
5. When will it be on the ballot?
6. As a state constitutional amendment, what percentage of votes will it need to pass?
7. How many signatures did you collect to qualify it for the ballot?
8. How much did it cost to put it on the ballot?
9. Was it done with volunteers or a paid team?
10. Which paid team?
11. Who provided the money to hire the team to collect the signatures to put it on the ballot?
12. How much do you expect to spend to get it passed?
13. Do you have much opposition?
14. Who's supporting it now?
15. What does Proposition 71 do?
16. The California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative, proposed for the November 2004 statewide ballot, will create the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine ("Institute").
17. Who will run this institute? How will it decide whom to fund?
18. From the Yes on 71 web site: The \$295 million in annual funding, spread over ten years, will catapult California to the forefront of life-saving stem cell research, providing the scientific community the opportunity and critically needed resources to discover new treatments and cures for our generation and generations to come.
19. How do you know it will "catapult California to the forefront of life-saving stem cell research"? Won't other countries be investing in this as well? What if the state funds half a billion or so in research and the Koreans or British or Israelis make the important breakthrough's first?
20. How many lives has stem cell research saved so far?
21. How certain is it that 3 billion dollars in research funding will lead to important breakthroughs?
22. Why isn't research with somatic and umbilical stem cells, and a few existing embryonic stem cell lines, which IS funded by the U.S. Government, good enough?
23. From the Yes on 71 web site: Administrative costs will be capped at 3% of annual funding to ensure funds focus on research and results.
24. I thought research institutions will be spending 25% of their grants on their OWN administrative costs.
25. What is the "Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee"? Who will be on it? What will its authority be? What power will patient advocacy groups have on it?

26. What are the facts and logic behind your belief that spending \$3 billion dollars on embryonic stem cell research will lead to useful treatments?
27. <http://www.ralphmoss.com/caind1.html>
28. From Ralph Moss' "The Cancer Industry": The year 1996 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of President Nixon's "war on cancer." During this time, the federal government has spent over \$25 billion on cancer research, while the American Cancer Society (ACS) and various other private organizations have spent a nearly equal sum.
29. If almost \$50 billion dollars in less-inflated money hasn't been enough to cure cancer, why do you think that a mere \$3 billion will be enough to find cures for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, and the others?
30. From the Yes on 71 web site: Proposition 71, the Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative, is designed to turn the hope for those cures into reality, by using tax-free state bonds to fund stem cell research at California's medical research facilities.
31. In what sense are these bonds tax-free? In the sense that no taxes will be needed to pay for them, or in the sense that the people who buy them won't have to pay taxes on the money they make from them?
32. Who will be selling these bonds? Will they be sold all at once, or gradually? How gradually? In what denominations? What kind of interest will they pay? What categories of individuals and institutions do you expect will buy them?
33. What's the timetable for redeeming the bonds? How much, in total, will California taxpayers be paying to provide the \$3 billion in research funding?
34. Couldn't you turn around the Federal government for a lot less than \$3 billion dollars and get it to make these grants out of federal funds?
35. Who will own the intellectual property rights in the discoveries, treatments, cures, and medications developed with the \$3 billion in taxpayer money?
36. Who will profit from the rights to these discoveries? Will they belong to the people of California or to privately-held and publicly-owned corporations? Do any of the corporations likely to profit from Proposition 71-funded breakthroughs have directors, officers, or shareholders who have contributed to Proposition 71, either to put it on the ballot or to get it passed? How much have they contributed?
37. Who will benefit from the treatments developed? On what basis will they be offered to people? Having footed the bill for the research, will all Californians be entitled to have these treatments, for Alzheimer's, and Parkinson's, and diabetes and all the other terrible ravagers of mankind, for free? If not, how will access to them be determined?
38. Which professional organizations are involved in running the Yes on 71 campaign? Who have they worked for in the past? How much are they being paid? On what basis? Do they get a bonus if the measure passes? How much is it?
39. Have you calculated the expected total ROI for the venture capitalists from Silicon Valley who are the principal backers Proposition 71 on the ballot, on the money they're investing in this project? Do you think they have? How

does that compare to other ways of investing venture money at the present time?

40. Is there any way to stop the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine ("Institute") once it's been set up?
41. Why not let the California State government appropriate \$3 billion dollars for this project?
42. Given that finding cures for these diseases using stem cells or any other method would allow whoever finds these cures to make billions of dollars, why can't the free market be relied upon to generate the treatments? Why involve the government, and public money, at all?
43. Aren't the scientific breakthroughs, if they are to be found, as likely to be found by a few very creative scientists thinking long and hard about the problems? How much did Watson and Crick spend on discovering the double-helix?
44. How much of the \$3 billion will be spent on buildings, the construction of which will be done by, I assume, mostly non-scientists? Aren't there enough research labs in California already? Are any developers contributing money to the Proposition 71 campaign fund? Which ones? How much have they contributed or are they expected to contribute going forward?
45. Is there anything else about Proposition 71 that we haven't covered that you think *Stem Cell World* listeners ought to know?
46. Thanks very much for talking with us today on *Stem Cell World*.