

## Bush's Stem Cell Ban to End?

by Bob Grant  
January 30, 2009

The rumors around Washington, DC say that President Barack Obama could overturn George W. Bush's 2001 federal funding ban on embryonic stem cell research using lines that were derived after August 9 of that year as soon as next week.

Rick Weiss, senior fellow at liberal think tank the Center for American Progress, wrote in an email to The Scientist that, while he has no inside information, there is "a lot of buzz in the advocacy community" regarding a lifting of the ban. Weiss continued that the specifics of Obama's imminent announcement are unclear, but that "scientists are going to be happy."

Scientific American quoted Harold Varmus, a key science adviser to Obama speaking at a meeting of the New York Stem Cell Foundation this week, saying that there is "reason to believe that there will be some executive order in the near future to reverse the Bush doctrine."

Obama may detail a new policy with regard to government funding for embryonic stem cell research or he may simply reverse the Bush ban and leave the policy crafting up to officials at the National Institutes of Health or other agencies.