

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

January 13, 2006 LB 57

pick up the standard embryology textbook used at the University of Nebraska Medical School and medical schools throughout the country. It's a book called Introduction to the Developing Human. It has no Catholic imprimatur on it. It's not produced by the Catholic Church. It's a medical textbook used by students in med schools. I'm going to read a few passages from this textbook, because I think it directly bears on some of the points that Senator Chambers is struggling to make. Quoting now: The intricate processes by which a baby develops from a single cell are miraculous, and few events are more exciting than a mother's viewing of her embryo during an ultrasound examination. Human development is a continuous process that begins when an oocyte, or ovum, from a female is fertilized by a sperm from a male. Although most development...developmental changes occur during the embryonic and fetal periods, some important changes occur during later periods of development, infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Although it is customary to divide human development into prenatal, or before birth, and postnatal, after birth, periods, birth is merely a dramatic event during development resulting in a change in environment. Development does not stop at birth. Important changes, in addition to growth, occur after birth--example, development of teeth and female breasts. The brain triples in weight between birth and 16 years. Most developmental changes are completed by the age of 25. Then it goes into a definition of "zygote." This is the single cell that results from the union of the oocyte and the sperm. A zygote is the beginning of a new human being. That's not Catholic dogma. That's science. That's the science that's taught in our Med School and med schools throughout the United States, not just this textbook, but any decent embryology textbook is going to have that information in it. That's basic science. Senator Chambers might not know when human life begins; most of us do. The book goes on: Human development begins at fertilization, the process during which the male gamete, or sperm, unites with the female gamete, or oocyte or ovum, to form a single cell called a zygote. This highly specialized, totipotent cell mark the beginning of each of us as a unique individual. That's not Catholic dogma. That's science. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Foley. On with