

Fetus bill may be recalled

ANNAPOLIS (AP) — Members of the House Environmental Matters Committee, concerned about a developing floor fight that could sharply change the intent of a fetal experimentation bill, may try to bring the bill back to committee to kill it.

A decision as to whether an effort will be made to re-refer the bill sponsored by Del. Torrey Brown, D-Balt., will likely depend on securing unanimous agreement of the committee members, a committee source said Wednesday.

Committee Chairman John Arnick, D-Balt. County, made the suggestion this week after a group of legislators united behind Del. Andrew Burns, DBalt., in attempting to amend Brown's bill.

The committee approved Brown's bill last week, but has not yet voted on a much more restrictive measure introduced by Burns. Both bills prompted much debate during the committee's public hearing.

The bill introduced by Brown, the only physician in the General Assembly and a member of the Environmental Matters Committee, would not ban all research on human fetuses. It would, instead, adopt guidelines handed down last May by a federal commission and would allow research if consent of the mother is obtained.

Burns' measure, on the other hand, would prohibit all research on a live human fetus unless it is specifically designed to aid the mother or fetus.

"Yes, we talked about bringing my bill back to committee," Brown said. "I devoted a lot of time and effort to putting together a bill that does what a host of opponents wanted done. Then I find they're still opponents."

"They're trying to make my bill into a bill like Burns'," he continued.

Brown's bill has already come up on the House floor three times, but opponents have delayed it each time with amendments intended to make it more restrictive.

One key objection cited by Burns, Curran and others is a provision allowing research when the mother gives her consent after the proposed research is explained to her.

Mandel friends seek trial move

BALTIMORE (UPI) — Three co-defendants of Gov. Marvin Mandel say three years of news accounts about Maryland political corruption have so prejudiced potential jurors that they want their trials moved from Baltimore to another federal judicial district.

The change of venue motions filed in U.S. District Court Wednesday do not include Mandel, who has insisted on being tried before a Maryland jury. Since the U.S. District Court in Baltimore is the state's only federal court, the men apparently would be tried in another state if their petition is granted.

In their motions, lawyers for W. Dale Hess, Harry W. Rodgers III and William A. Rodgers gave Judge Herbert F. Murray a stack of newspaper clippings 10-inches high to support their 58-page brief.

In a separate 15-page brief, Hess' attorneys asked Murray to dismiss all charges against their client on grounds the federal grand jury which indicted Hess last Nov. 24 was prejudiced by news accounts.

Today is the deadline for filing pretrial motion in the case and lawyers say they expect additional petitions to be entered. A tentative trial date has been set for May 3.

The two other defendants in the case are Irvin Kovens and Ernest N. Cory Jr., a Laurel lawyer.

The six were named on a 24 count federal indictment charging mail fraud and violation of federal anti-racketeering statutes. The indictments allege an exchange of favors involving the Mandel Administration lobbying for legislation favorable to the Marlboro Race Track and the governor's inclusion in two business ventures.

In their motions, lawyers said the trials should be moved because the defendants are accused of defrauding the "citizens of the state of Maryland" and without change of venue the "government would be trying them" before a jury composed of victims of their alleged wrongdoing.

Burch protests HUD 'impatience'

BALTIMORE (AP) — Maryland Atty. General Francis B. Burch Wednesday filed a letter of protest with a federal judge over the refusal by civil rights officials to postpone a hearing notice in the dispute over higher education desegregation in Maryland.

Burch said he is concerned about the "psychological" effect of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare's intention to send out hearing notices before U.S. District Court Judge Edward S. Northrup reaches a decision in the state's suit to block the proceedings.

He said federal education officials may be prejudiced by the notice and may be reluctant to award education funds to the state.

"If HEW issues a hearing notice, there would be a disposition on the part of federal officers not to grant education contracts to Maryland institutions, but

allocate them to other schools," he said.

"Psychologically, a hearing notice could do irreparable damage to the reputation of the state of Maryland," Burch said.

Burch sent a letter to Judge Northrup detailing HEW's refusal to postpone the issuance of a hearing notice until after the scheduled March 8 ruling on the state's suit.

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