

Man-Monkey Hybrid Sparks Fears of 'Frankenstein' Creatures

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Earlier this year, researchers at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California participated in an experiment with China and injected human stem cells into monkey embryos, blending of man and monkey. The embryos were allowed to live and develop for 19 days. While federal officials have put a moratorium on funding such research, Congress is reviewing restrictions while debating a bill to spend nearly \$200 billion of taxpayers' money on research and development endeavors to counter China. Republican Senator Mike Braun is concerned that experiments will create 'Frankenstein' human-animal hybrids, called chimeras. Braun and several other Republicans sought to amend the Senate's massive research and development spending bill last week to block certain human-animal chimeras, but the amendment failed by a 48-49 vote along party lines. Researchers conducting human-animal hybrid experiments struck fear into federal lawmakers worried that nightmare scenarios of Frankenstein creatures have become a reality.

Earlier this year, researchers announced a blending of man and monkey.

The Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California, said in April that it

participated with a China-led research team in an experiment by injecting human stem cells into monkey embryos. They allowed the resulting creature to live and grow for 19 days before terminating it. The researchers responsible for the technology used in the experiment said their work aided the study of embryonic development.

Federal officials have placed a moratorium on U.S. funding of such research. Still, they are reviewing the restrictions and scientific developments as Congress debates a bill to spend nearly \$200 billion of taxpayers' money on research and development endeavors to counter China.

Sen. **Mike Braun**, Indiana Republican, said **he** is worried that such human-animal hybrid experiments will cross ethical boundaries and contravene the dignity and sanctity of human life.

"I mean, any of us could speculate on kind of the Frankenstein concept, let's put it that way, which that was being referred to as in terms of what this leads to," Mr. **Braun** said. "I don't know. I think that I do believe that there's a genuine interest in taking so much that we've learned through DNA analysis, understanding the genome of not only human beings but other animals, that there's going to be that [temptation] contagion to go beyond maybe, just the altruistic effort of finding cures for very, very vexing ailments like ALS, like Alzheimer's, like any of the diseases that are out there that are significant, that we're not even to the point where we know exactly what causes it, let alone cures."

Mr. **Braun** and fellow Republicans seek to outlaw chimeras involving the blending of human embryos with animal wombs and animal embryos with human wombs.

Now that a "chimera" is no longer an ancient mythological creature having parts of a lion, goat and serpent, but an actual human-animal hybrid, Republican lawmakers want to establish baselines for American research rooted in a belief in the dignity of human life.

Mr. **Braun** and Sens. James Lankford of Oklahoma and Steve Daines of Montana sought to amend the Senate's massive research and development spending bill last week to block certain human-animal chimeras, but the amendment failed by a 48-49 vote along party lines. Three senators did not vote.

Two absent Republicans – Sens. Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee and Thom Tillis of North Carolina – could not have changed the outcome, Mr. **Braun** said. Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer, New York Democrat, would have blocked a vote on the amendment or ensured that Sen. Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, who also did not vote, would have joined the rest of the Democratic Caucus, he said.

Mr. Lankford said he thought blocking human-animal blending ought to have passed by a voice vote and was shocked to find Democratic opposition.

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