

U.S. FORUM CONNECTION #187, JULY 2019

This publication is intended for your information about issues important to education, women and children. How you choose to use the information included here is up to you.

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PROPOSED CHANGES IN VOTING LAWS

The For the People Act of 2019 ([S.949](#)) has been introduced in the Senate and has 40 cosponsors. Its purpose is to deal with voting, campaign finance and ethics. The bill would provide for Internet voter registration and would allow persons 16 years of age or older to register to vote in any state in which voting under the age of 18 is allowed.

ALTERNATE REGULATION

A relatively recent scientific advance called CRISPR (pronounced crisper) allows genes to be modified. It has been described as being like using a pair of scissors to modify genes by adding genetic material or deleting genetic material. In November 2018 a Chinese physician used CRISPR technology to alter genes in two human embryos which were fertilized in vitro. This has caused an uproar in the medical/scientific community. Although there would seem to be little objection to using this therapy on adults past child bearing age, using the technique on children or anyone of child bearing age could result in passing on the alteration or some distorted form of it to subsequent generations.

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If you recall cloning was first experimented in 1996 using a sheep named Dolly. The reason for this experimentation using an animal was to avoid causing unexpected problems with the procedure. Most animals have a much shorter lifespan than humans. (Dolly lived seven years.) Also the animal could be prevented from procreating thus avoiding long-term unanticipated consequences. Alternatively the animal could be destroyed should the experimental procedure yield potentially dangerous results. If a human showed evidence of major problems as a result of the procedure, what could be done. If there were problems with an experiment involving animals. The animal could be destroyed. This could cause a moral dilemma when applied to humans. If a human evidences major problems, as a result of the procedure, how would one decide what steps to take. Likewise I doubt the person would opt not to have children. Another aspect possibly not considered, can the procedure be reversed? Can it be successful if this is attempted. Some CRISPR gene modification has been studied in mice.

In the recent Chinese experimentation using CRISPR two infants were subjected to gene therapy. No permission was sought or obtained. The long-term consequences of this procedure can be guessed at, but as with many scientific experiments, there are often unexpected developments. These children will probably live for decades and in all probability they will have children. Presumably use of CRISPR gene modification will be regulated by governments in the future. We see how slow that can be especially with regard to a complex medical scientific procedure. In this case consequences of this action might not be noticed until decades after CRISPR was used. In the meantime the scientific and the medical communities have the means to regulate this experimentation by controlling publication in scientific journals and by refusing the person/team from making presentations at scientific meetings. For more complete information on this subject go to https://www.inkstonenews.com/science/scientist-he-jiankui-defends-gene-editing-babies-leaves-questions-unanswered/article/2175418?gclid=CjwKCAjwm4rqBRBUEiwAwaWjjFLxRXrG0xhyLH_0XcV82-4QtTYyVuLtkEPIAGuZPpkcATZE1CpSdRoC85UQAvD_BwE

MEDICARE AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Although the cost of prescription drugs was one of the few things on which the parties agreed, ([H.R.991](#) and [S.25, H.R.860](#)) All of these bills are still in committee and none has not been brought to the floor for a vote in either house. It is estimated that 40% of Americans either didn't fill prescriptions, skipped doses or cut pills in half in an effort to make the medication last

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longer. Consider a person I know who cut her daily doses in half to save money. She ended up in the hospital for a week. (What is cheaper, subsidizing the expensive medication or paying for a week in a hospital?)

DITCH MITCH

Although many bills have passed the House of Representatives and many bills have been filed in the Senate, very few bills have been brought to the floor for a vote in the Senate. The reason for this is that Mitch McConnell, the majority leader in the Senate has allowed voting on very few bills. Almost any bill brought up for a vote will pass the Senate. Fairly recently an organized effort has been mounted to defeat McConnell who is up for reelection in 2020. The organization calls itself "Ditch Mitch."

FORUM FACEBOOK PAGE LINK

For those of you desiring discussion of legislative topics there is a U. S. Forum Facebook page online at <http://www.facebook.com/DKG.US.Forum>

FORUM WEB SITE: <http://www.usforumdkg.org/>

CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATOR

If you wish to contact your senator to express your opinion, you can call the Congressional Switchboard at 1-202-224-3121. [This is not a toll free number]. Another way of contacting your senator is via email or a telephone number which is not toll free both of which are available at

https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Email access and addresses

<http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House of Representatives

<http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the U.S. Senate

White House 1-202-456-1111

FIVE CONSTITUENT CONTACTS WILL CAUSE A LEGISLATOR TO PAY SERIOUS ATTENTION TO A GIVEN ISSUE.
