WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell voted today to expand embryonic stem cell research in a quest to find a cure for the millions of Americans who suffer from diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's and Huntington's Disease.

Mitchell's pro-cure colleagues joined him in passing the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act by a bipartisan vote of 247-176. The Senate passed the measure in April by a 63 to 34 margin. The legislation now goes to the President, who is expected to veto the bill.

Prior to the vote, Mitchell made the following speech on the floor of the House:

"Congress rarely gets an opportunity to do what it can today: offer hope to the millions of Americans who suffer from diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Lou Gehrig's and Huntington's Disease.

"As I have said many times, I believe the best way we can honor life is by investing in science and ethical research.

"A growing majority of the American people, including my constituents in Arizona's Fifth Congressional District – believe this is an investment we should make. And they were proud when, last January, 253 members of the House voted to support the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act.

"The American people support this research because they understand that we have a moral obligation to invest in embryonic stem cell research because it provides the best hope for a cure for these diseases and many others.

"They know we're already seeing progress in this field.

"Just last month, scientists used embryonic stem cells to create insulin-producing cells that could one day lead to a cure for diabetes.

"Just imagine what we could do with a more serious commitment to stem cell research.

"Mr. Speaker, the American people are watching us today.

"And the millions of Americans who we could help by passing this legislation are depending on us today.

"Let us do the right thing, and pass this legislation."