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### Judge: Shut down anti-stem cell Web site

*Elliot Institute research site too similar to one owned by proponents, he rules.*

By Kelly Wiese  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JEFFERSON CITY — A federal judge on Friday ordered a group that opposes most embryonic stem cell research to take down its Web site, which had been similar to that of another group supporting stem cell research.

The Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures filed a lawsuit earlier this week against the Elliot Institute, saying it stole the images and design from its Web site.

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The coalition is pushing a ballot measure that would explicitly guarantee that all stem cell research allowed by the federal government could occur in Missouri. It is collecting petition signatures with the goal of getting its proposed constitutional amendment on the November ballot.

The Elliot Institute is pushing an alternative ballot measure to prohibit most forms of embryonic stem cell research and other types of what it calls "human engineering." The proposal's language needs approval from the secretary of state's office before supporters can gather signatures.

The two Web sites use some of the same photos and have a similar design.

Institute Director David Reardon acknowledged the similarity but said he doesn't believe his group infringed on the coalition's rights. Nonetheless, he said he would comply with the ruling by U.S. District Judge Dean Whipple and await a further court hearing to make his case.

Reardon said he expected to remove some images and change the site's look without having to shut the whole thing down.

"We can just change the images. We will continue striving forward trying to push our initiative," he said.

The judge ordered the group to make the site inaccessible within 24 hours and

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barred it from using the design or Internet coding of the Coalition for Lifesaving Cures' site.

The coalition was pleased with the ruling.

"When the judge looked at the evidence and saw how blatant the stem cell opponents were in stealing the codes and information from our Web site, he said that it was an obvious and intentional attempt to confuse the public," chairman Donn Rubin said. "They're willing to use every tool of deception and disinformation to accomplish their goals."

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