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Chairman
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Marc Beer
Chief Executive Officer
ViaCell, Inc.

Micheline Mathews-
Roth, M.D.
Professor of Medicine,
Harvard Medical
School and Associate
Physician, Brigham
and Women's Hospital

Melissa A. Walsh
Chief of Staff

Melissa Walsh
MLSC Chief of Staff
(617) 834-4945
mwalsh@masslifesciences.com

Kofi Jones
Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development
(617) 788-3652
(617) 721-2231 (cell)
Kofi.jones@state.ma.us

MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER LAUNCHES NEW \$12 MILLION RESEARCH MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM

Government leaders join to launch "the next generation of innovation" in Massachusetts

BOSTON – Monday, February 11, 2008 - Governor Deval Patrick, Representative Michael Capuano, Senate President Therese Murray, and House Speaker Salvatore DiMasi gathered today to support the launch of a new \$12 million research investment program funded and administered by the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC).

Focused on attracting top scientific talent, spurring new research opportunities, and increasing industry-sponsored research in the Commonwealth, this innovative investment will foster and grow the state's scientific research enterprise. Investments will be dedicated to research at public and private universities and colleges, encouraging new work in areas such as stem cell research, genomics, RNA interference, proteomics, image analysis, and bioinformatics.

"With this exciting program, we are investing in the future health of the Commonwealth—its economic vitality, its academic excellence in public and private universities, and the well being of all our citizens," said Governor Patrick. "We are launching the next generation of innovation in Massachusetts."

An initial \$12 million in matching investments will be offered through three solicitations, each with a specific target for investment: new faculty, new research investigators, and new cooperative research in partnership with industry. Each investment includes a 1:1 match from the participating academic institution or industry partners. The awards selection process will be transparent and competitive, featuring expert external scientific peer review.

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This program fulfills an important part of the vision contemplated by the Legislature in the creation of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center and significantly strengthened by the Governor's Life Sciences Initiative. The grants will support research that could lead to life saving therapies and commercialized products, and will further the goal of sustaining and growing the state's vital life sciences super cluster.

Senator Ted Kennedy, who had planned to join the press conference but was unable to do so, issued a statement saying that "Massachusetts continues to lead the way in medical research that has immense potential for life-saving breakthroughs in the prevention, treatment, and care of devastating illnesses." "This grant program will give our universities and research institutions the vital resources they need to achieve their breakthroughs, and I commend Governor Patrick, Speaker DiMasi and Senate President Murray for their vision and leadership."

"This pioneering initiative presents a unique opportunity for Massachusetts to take full advantage of one of its most valuable assets – intellectual capital – and direct that resource towards research that can save lives by curing disease. This initiative will also help to stimulate the economy by creating jobs," said Congressman Michael Capuano.

Senate President Murray praised the collaborative support for the new research matching grant investment program. "This research investment program represents a true partnership between the Legislature, the Administration, state universities and colleges, and the Commonwealth's world-class Life Sciences industry," she said. "These investments recognize the importance of research in improving the quality of life in Massachusetts."

"We want to encourage talented researchers and scientists to take part in the Commonwealth's next wave of innovation," said House Speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi, "I believe our investments in life sciences will deliver research that can go from the lab bench to the bedside, while also spurring our state's economy."

Daniel O'Connell, Secretary of the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development and Chair of the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center, has emphasized the importance of research to downstream health and economic outcomes. "Investment in the life sciences research enterprise will improve health outcomes for the residents of Massachusetts." O'Connell noted, "We are fortunate that this particular program has the additional benefit of opening new avenues for job creation and industry growth in an important area of the Massachusetts economy."

The announcement took place at the Richard B. Simches Research Center at Massachusetts General Hospital, highlighting the importance of new scientific research in combating diseases and developing new medical treatments. "This investment will have a very positive symbolic and practical impact on the unparalleled life sciences research community in Massachusetts," said Peter Slavin, M.D., President of Massachusetts General Hospital.

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC) was created by the Legislature in the 2006 Economic Stimulus Bill to strengthen the life sciences sector in Massachusetts. Under the Patrick Administration, the MLSC is an integral vehicle to advance Governor Patrick's Life Sciences Initiative.

Information, schedules, application requirements, and deadlines for the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center matching grant investment program are available online at www.masslifesciences.com.

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