Gov. Perry Outlines the Texas BioPharmaceutical Strategy

*Shares insights with the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturing Association.*

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.*

**Friday, April 03, 2009**

Thank you Richard [Clark, Chmn, PhRMA Board] and thank you for your leadership of this remarkable organization.

It is a real honor for us to welcome all of you Texas. Now we need to figure out a way to get you to stay. You've committed no crime, so I can't bar you from leaving the state, so I'm going to take the next few minutes to explain why you should consider voluntarily putting down some roots here in Texas.

Let me start by saying I'm a strong supporter of your industry, and the difference you make in the lives of people.

I think highly of an industry that not only creates jobs and makes big investments in research, but also pursues products that improve and even save lives, then works to make them available to all who need them with efforts like your Partnership for Prescription Assistance.

Your products are an essential part of our lives and I believe your industry has a huge role to play in our state’s future.

We all know that the world economy moves quickly, rewarding innovators and leaving the “business-as-usual” crowd in the dust. That is why Texas has been so strong for so long...because business leaders in our state have a history of seizing opportunity.

Whether you're talking about an energy industry that sprang from the ground and transformed a nation, or high tech companies whose products are connecting people all over the globe, Texas has always been a leader.

If you ask me “what’s next” I’d have to put
biotech right near the top. I’m proud to say that Texas currently invests more in basic biomedical research than all but two other states, but am troubled that we rank in the bottom half when it comes to commercializing biomedical discoveries.

That is why we have been working so hard to leverage the remarkable research that occurs in our public universities. Rather than collect dust on a professor’s bookshelf, those discoveries need to be on the fast track toward testing, production and use.

That development track, from the “eureka” moment of discovery, to the time a medicine is administered to a patient, currently follows a path beyond Texas borders, mostly because of critical gaps in our state’s infrastructure.

When those ideas leave Texas, they take jobs and investment with them, and that’s a situation that we want to change. Fortunately, we are moving closer to our goal of moving drugs from bench-top to bedside, all within the borders of our state.

One of our key tools in that effort is our Emerging Technology Fund.

Since its creation in 2005, we have been using the ETF to stimulate the commercialization of university research, provide the financial glue for partnerships between the public, private and academic sectors, and fill the gaps in our biotechnology infrastructure.

Roughly 45% of our ETF investments have been in life sciences field, so you know we’re putting our money where the potential is.

The ETF has played a role in a broad range of new companies, including Halsa Pharmaceuticals and their search for an obesity cure, Diabetica Solutions, whose products will help prevent more than 2,000 diabetes-related amputations in the next five years, and Nanospectra, whose cancer therapy treatment selectively kills solid tumors without significantly damaging healthy tissue.

I make no apologies for investments in companies that are working to cure some of the greatest threats to our citizens. Instead, I want to point out some of the key additions we have made to our infrastructure over the past few years, additions that will move Texas to the forefront of this industry.

This infrastructure is being built on the foundation of our public universities…along with our world-class research hospitals, like M.D. Anderson where Billy Tauzin whipped cancer.

That infrastructure is based on our state’s bias for doing good, demonstrated by our citizens’ endorsement last year of a $3 billion cancer-fighting initiative. I want to thank the members of this organization for supporting Proposition 15 with such enthusiasm.

The infrastructure we’ve been building includes the Texas Therapeutic Institute and its work in the discovery of first lead candidates.

It is taking shape with addition of the best genomic discovery system at the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine in College Station, where 90% of the known knock-out stem cells can be found.

Speaking of College Station, it is also home to the Institute for Pre-Clinical Studies, where more than 30 clients are already engaged in intermediate and advanced development.

In short, our infrastructure is maturing and great research is happening. However, we will lose the enormous potential of these great Texas ideas to other states, if we don’t ramp up our manufacturing capability, beyond our current early-phase abilities.
That is why we recently announced a $50 million ETF investment in the National Center for Therapeutics Manufacturing.

For years, pharmaceutical companies have resigned themselves to the old model of dropping a billion dollars on a building, and manufacturing one product in it for twenty years.

As the industry changes and therapies target smaller and smaller populations, this modular facility will enable us to offer pharmaceutical companies of every size, the flexibility necessary to manufacture clinical grade commercial drugs in Texas.

In my estimation, this new facility is the final large piece of the pharmaceutical development track. The completion of this center will launch our state into a whole new stratosphere of achievement, driving us to the forefront of the forefront of the pharmaceutical industry for years to come.

This facility will bring us one step closer to my goal of containing the entire lifecycle for new drugs within our state, keeping investment, jobs and growth here where it belongs.

Forgive me for being biased, but I am convinced that there is no better place to live, work and raise a family than Texas. It seems Billy [Tauzin] must agree with me: he just bought a place here in Texas. Maybe you should too.

You can join him in a place where our ongoing emphasis on developing the infrastructure and cultivating an environment of innovative research has Texas on its way to becoming the best place to discover cures, produce medicines and do work that saves lives.

That is the place I am proud to live, a place where you can pursue your dreams, a state whose doors are wide open to innovators who want to change the world.

Thank you again for choosing Texas and San Antonio for your conference and thank you again for your life-changing work.

May God bless you all and, through you, may He continue to bless the great state of Texas.

###