



March 2007 GBP E-Chronicle

House Hearing April 9 on Umbilical Cord Blood Bank Bill

SB 148 Assigned to House Science & Technology Committee

Senate Bill 148, which proposes establishing a public umbilical cord blood bank for research and medical treatment, will be the subject of a hearing April 9, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., at the House Science & Technology Committee in Room 403 of the State Capitol.

The Georgia Biomedical Partnership (GBP) supports the bill's efforts to establish the cord blood bank and provide access to this tissue and blood for stem cell research and treatment. However, the bill also includes unnecessary references to embryonic stem cell research. These references are inaccurate and unscientific. They disparage a promising form of research that may lead to cures for thousands of Georgians currently suffering from untreatable diseases. The references are meant to be divisive and, if enacted into law, would indicate Georgia is hostile to this research. This perception would needlessly hinder Georgia's life sciences economic development initiatives.

SB 148 passed the Senate by a vote of 39-15 on March 20 with the inflammatory references to embryonic stem cell research despite efforts of GBP, Emory University and others, who urged the full Senate to remove the unscientific language so the bill could be enacted with 100 percent support.

The GBP will ask the House Science & Technology Committee April 9 to amend SB 148 to remove the unnecessary and inflammatory references to embryonic stem cell research. GBP members are encouraged to attend the hearing to support the GBP position. You should also contact, via phone and email, Representatives on the House committee and your local Representative to urge them to remove the divisive references to embryonic stem cell research and amend the bill as the GBP suggests.

Link to the House Science & Technology Committee members:

http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2007_08/house/Committees/scienceTech/gahst.htm

Link to find local representatives: <http://www.sos.state.ga.us/cgi-bin/Locator.asp>

Here is a link to SB 148 http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2007_08/sum/sb148.htm

HR 323 Amended to Form House Study Committee

Initiative Recast as HR 662 to Create Bioeconomic Development Plan

HR 323's proposed establishment of a joint House-Senate Bioeconomic Development Commission was recast this week as an effort to form a House Study Committee to explore establishing a master plan for life sciences industry development in Georgia.

Rep. Charlice Byrd, the author of HR 323, amended the resolution to help move forward her initiative to bring together government, universities and industry in a partnership to endorse adoption of a statewide plan to create jobs, strengthen education and improve the health and quality of life for all Georgians.

The resolution, now called HR 662, would create the House Georgia Bioeconomic Development Study Committee consisting of five members, appointed by House Speaker Glenn Richardson, representing the life sciences industry, government and universities.

The GBP enthusiastically supports Rep. Byrd's efforts and encourages its members to contact their Representative to urge House passage of the resolution. HR 662 was passed by the House Special Rules Committee Friday, and now goes to the House Rules Committee. If approved by the House Rules Committee, the resolution would go to the House floor for a vote. The study committee is not subject to consideration by the Senate.

HR 662 states:

"The committee shall meet at least five times per year at the call of the chairperson or upon the request of at least three of its members. At least one meeting shall be designated as a Summit hosted by the committee which shall be held no later than August 2007. The Bioeconomic Summit shall bring together government, university, and industry leaders in an attempt to negotiate the details of enabling legislation and endorse its legislative proposals for the 2008 session of the Georgia General Assembly."

In addition, the study committee will consider ways the state can take advantage of hosting the Biotechnology Industry Organization's BIO 2009 International Convention. This conference is the largest life sciences technology convention in the world and will attract 25,000 bioscience professionals from more than 60 countries to Atlanta.

The resolution states:

"The committee shall identify the opportunities presented by the BIO 2009 International Convention as a showcase to the global community of the state's life sciences industry and initiatives in healthcare, agriculture, bioenergy, forestry, environmental management and national security. The committee shall develop an analysis to consider allocating sufficient funding for the state to participate in the conference and take advantage of this economic opportunity with the added goal of placing Georgia and Atlanta in a four-year rotation as host of this international convention, the largest life sciences conference in the world."

Link to HR 662: http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2007_08/pdf/hr662.pdf

The GBP urges members to contact, via phone and email, Representatives, asking them to support HR 662.

Link to find your local Representative: <http://www.sos.state.ga.us/cgi-bin/Locator.asp>

ELN Focuses on Venture Capitalists in March

So...what is a Venture Capitalist?

With a career panel composed of venture capitalists, and a dinner series lead by a local VC, Emerging Leaders Network (ELN) members interested in this field had a reservoir of resources in March.

A VC is an investor willing to take risks on the potential success of a new product or invention. When choosing where to place his/her money, the investor will typically review up to 100 business plans before a combination of business sense and overall gut instinct align on one innovation. If the product goes to market and is a success, the investor will receive a portion of the profit and/or percentages of future profits; this is the ideal situation. For the risk-averse person, this is probably not the best career choice, as many failed investments usually precede any pay-off. For the individual who likes to gamble, however, this is essentially a legal way to do so.

Venture Capitalist Investing in the Life Sciences

With \$7.2 billion dollars of venture capital money invested in the life sciences in 2006 (up from 6.0 billion in 2005), science-savvy investors certainly have their choice of projects. Indeed, 28% of all venture capital investments for 2006 were funneled into life science inventions. The data are from The Money Tree Report by PricewaterhouseCoopers and the National Venture Capital Association.

The increase in funds devoted to this field was driven by both the biotechnology and medical device sectors, equally. Some recent products that received VC money in Georgia include:

- A technology by GTronix that enhances performance and functionality for portable devices, while drastically reducing power consumption;
- Drugs to combat the hardening of arteries developed by InVasc;
- Medical devices used for heart monitoring developed by CardioMems.

Georgia was recently ranked seventh among US states for number of life sciences companies.

Although a college degree is not required to pursue this career, most VC's have a degree in business and many have MBAs. Overall, however, the keys to succeeding in this field are to have a good business sense and to have the diligence to perform exhaustive research. Whether these traits are acquired through school or experience, however, is irrelevant in the long run.

Upcoming ELN events

- April 10 - An evening of networking and informative dialogue on the impact and trends in the globalization of biotechnology.
GTRI Conference Center, 6:00-8:30pm
- April 18 - A challenge to regular attendants of the GBP breakfasts to bring your ELN young professional with you to the event
GTRI Conference Center, 7:30am-9:00am

For more information on ELN, see www.gabio.org/cmt_emerging_leaders_ntwk.asp.

US-Russian Researchers Collaborate on Alternative Antibiotics

USDA Scientist to Discuss New Strategy to Combat Antibiotic Resistance

The April 18 Georgia Biomedical Partnership monthly breakfast meeting will feature Bruce S. Seal, PhD, the Research Leader for the Poultry Microbiological Safety Research Unit of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Dr. Seal has been an active molecular biologist for the past twenty years primarily involved with veterinary virology. A widely published author, Dr. Seal has made scientific presentations at more than 90 internationally recognized conferences, and has presented over 60 national or internationally invited seminars at scientific institutions, as well as to commodity associates.

His most recent work includes an extensive molecular epidemiological analyses of Newcastle disease virus isolates and supported that effort for the USDA's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service during the 2002-2003 out-break in the southwestern U.S., along with directing development of improved diagnostics. A detailed biography of Dr. Seal can be found at https://www.gabio.org/event_details.asp?id=89.

Dr. Seal will be discussing the collaborative efforts of a team of Russian Federation scientists at the State Research Center for Applied Microbiology and Biotechnology in Obolensk and investigators at the Poultry Microbiological Safety Research Unit of the USDA in Athens.

These scientists have identified natural proteins, or bacteriocins, from "good" bacteria that inhibit growth of bacterial contaminants such as *Salmonella* spp., *Campylobacter* spp. and *Clostridium perfringens* in live chickens. The antimicrobial peptides can consistently reduce bacterial counts in live chickens under laboratory conditions and could potentially be utilized as alternatives to currently administered antibiotic growth promoters in animal feeds.

Dr. Seal also will discuss the potential for use of bacteriocins to combat antibiotic resistant bacteria among both animals and humans.

Here is a link to register for the April 18 breakfast meeting: https://www.gabio.org/event_details.asp?id=89

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