

California Stem Cell Report

June 12, 2020

To: CIRM Finance Subcommittee, Maria T. Millan
From: David Jensen, Editor/Publisher California Stem Cell Report

Re: Wind-Down Plan

One of the fine accomplishments of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine has been the openness and accessibility of its vast array of information, largely through its web site but also via other means such as Facebook and other resources.

Whether the initiative to refinance CIRM wins approval or not, CIRM has had a significant impact on the field. Its history should not be lost as can easily happen to state agencies that just fade away. Which brings me to the Wind-Down plan presented to you today. The brief outline on the agenda does not contain an element to ensure that the complete history of CIRM will be preserved. Such a component, however, may well already be part of the wind-down timetable. If not, it should be.

CIRM's history has significant value for historians, policy makers and those who study government and scientific research. CIRM is unique in California history. Nationally, no other state has funded scientific research at the level that California has. It has done this uniquely, using state bonds and a direct democracy tool called the initiative. Patient advocates have gained a stronger voice at CIRM. Even today, during the Covid-19 awards meeting, one could see their influence in the discussion of how to better serve the underserved communities. And we should not forget that the agency led the way nationally when it created standards for human embryonic stem cell research during CIRM's earliest days.

Preserving the CIRM story digitally in a readable and accessible format should not be all that costly. And it would be a significant contribution to helping those who come after us learn about how this \$3 billion effort came about and navigated with considerable success through the early days of what some may ultimately call the stem cell revolution. It would be a sad day if the complete record of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine is not preserved for posterity.

Thank you for your consideration.

