

TRAN 1-12907 Letter of Support from Don C. Reed

We all know Tom Okarma, a giant in the field of stem cell therapy, with a record of success going back decades. After his work with Geron, Okarma founded Asterias and continued the development of the only regenerative therapy for spinal cord injury, as well as an hESC-derived dendritic cell cancer immunotherapy, in clinical development for lung cancer

We also know someone—perhaps we ourselves-- who suffers from myocardial infarction: a heart attack. Even with the current standard of care, heart attacks all too often develop into chronic heart failure, which not only can be fatal, but is a staggeringly expensive condition that will soon reach \$70 billion in America alone. The disease—and accompanying costs-- disproportionately afflict underserved communities.

The project being considered involves a biologic drug that stimulates heart regeneration after a heart attack. To restore the useful function of a damaged heart? That is a straightforward battle for life itself.

A big plus for the proposal is the ease of its implementation. It does not require surgery, special equipment nor physician training. It is administered through what they call a wearable injector. This will be an outpatient procedure, broadly available through Medicare and private insurance to the community of patients with heart attacks.

The reviewers recognized the project as unique; CIRM has nothing else like it. Further, the comments of the critics were responded to in a serious fashion, showing a willingness to adapt when appropriate. CIRM reviewers are experts, and were responded to accordingly.

Finally, because of the seeming ease and affordability of its administration, this approach may advance health justice, so that not only the super-rich can afford to be made well.

Your “Yes” vote for TRAN1-12907 will allow the fulfillment of FDA pre-IND requirements, and place this treatment at the door of the first-in-humans clinical trial.

It seems to me exactly what CIRM is built for—to ease suffering and save lives—affordably.

Please allow this important effort to go forward.

Thank you,

Don C. Reed