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HEADLINE: Maryland 'We Work for Health' Calls on Elected Officials to Focus on Medical Research and Innovation to Bolster Economy and Find Cures

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ANNAPOLIS, Md., March 19 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ — Members from local business, labor, academic and health care groups, including John Hurson, former Chairman of the Maryland House of Delegates Health & Government Operations Committee, today introduced We Work for Health of Maryland — a unique network of partners dedicated to protecting and fostering medical research and innovation in the United States and in Maryland.

"New advancements in medicine, improved health status, countless jobs and steady economic growth have all resulted from continued efforts to further medical innovation," said Hurson, the Maryland We Work for Health co-Chairman. "The diverse members of We Work for Health of Maryland understand — and applaud state and federal elected officials who understand — that Maryland's future prosperity and the health of its citizens will largely depend on becoming an innovation economy and maintaining a lead role in scientific, technological and medical research and innovation."

According to a recent study by Archstone Consulting, the medical research and innovation sector provides employment for millions of Americans who research, manufacture, distribute and promote innovative therapies that positively influence public health and quality of life. Local businesses have also felt the ripple effect of these employment opportunities. Study author Michael Eckstut, Principal and Life Sciences and Strategy Practice Leader, Archstone Consulting, commented, "Our research indicates that the biopharmaceutical sector has made a substantial contribution to U.S. economic growth, and that on average, this sector contributed more to GDP on a per employee basis and grew faster than the rest of the economy from 1996 to 2006."

The study found:

— Biopharmaceutical companies supported a total of 89,675 jobs in Maryland in 2006. — Direct biopharmaceutical wages in Maryland were estimated to be \$2.3 billion in 2006, resulting in an estimated \$537.4 million in federal taxes and \$86.4 million in state taxes. — In 2008, U.S. scientists and researchers conducted 21,795 studies to develop medicines targeting cancers, rare diseases, and other important conditions. 3,820 of these trials were active in Maryland including 1,224 regarding cancer and other neoplasms. — In Maryland, biopharmaceutical companies invested \$1.2 billion in research and development in 2006.

"We Work for Health of Maryland is dedicated to growing opportunities for ongoing research and development of new medical advancements through advocacy," said Maryland We Work for Health Advisory Board Member Howard Schiff, Executive Director of the Pharmacists Association. "The bottom line is that medical innovation is good for the economy and even better for patients in Maryland and beyond. There is no reason why the search for cures to a variety of diseases can't come to a close in our own backyard."

We Work for Health of Maryland has partners across the state including:

— Arthritis Foundation, Maryland Chapter — Baltimore Medical System — Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore — **Greater Baltimore Committee** — Greater Baltimore Tech Council — Greater Washington Board of Trade — Maryland Chamber of Commerce — Maryland Hospital Association — Maryland Optometrists Association — Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers — Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce — Tech Council of Maryland — University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute

These partners support public policies that recognize the value of innovation and take steps to preserve and foster America's ability to innovate. Specifically, We Work for Health:

— Supports opportunities to lead in the research and development of new cures that make a difference in the quality of life for Marylanders and millions of Americans. — Recognizes the importance of all participants, including our communities, our patients, our employees and our business and community partners. — Encourages increased investment in educational programs dealing with science, technology, engineering and mathematics. — Believes everyone should have access to products and services that can improve their health and quality of life and support pricing strategies that can achieve this goal. — Participates in community service efforts that demonstrate good corporate citizenship and contribute to an increased quality of life in our communities.

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Source We Work for Health of Maryland

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Highlights: Greater Baltimore Committee