



HSSA Bill Passed

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After a very long and challenging legislative session, the first ever Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) bill was passed through the Washington State House and Senate. The HSSA bill allows for a single county in the state of Washington to receive 0.2 percent of the State sales tax from that county, with provision that the funds are used for Health Sciences projects.



Later this year, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HEC Board) will start receiving applications from Washington counties meeting the population criteria of less than 1 million people for the HSSA. Spokane County will be one of those applicants, with the hopes that the tax funds will go to the ISM and its partner, Project Access. Once the HEC Board has chosen the county, and should that county be Spokane County, a board will be formed to govern the funds. One of the stipulations of forming the HSSA board is Governor Christine Gregoire will chose three board members, the Mayor of Spokane will pick three members, the Spokane County Commissioners will chose three, with the option of the nine chosen members to elect another five board members. The HSSA board will then have the decision to make on whether or not to bond against the tax percentage, providing funds up front for recruitment of scientists, staff, supercomputers and for making headway on a new building. Lewis Rumpler, the ISM's COO, is confident that Spokane County will be chosen based on merit and the economic concentration of health care and higher education assets.

ISM Founding Partners



Gov. Gregoire Signs HSSA Bill at ISM



On May 1, 2007, Governor Christine Gregoire travelled to Spokane to sign the HSSA bill in to law at the ISM offices. This was a momentous occasion for the ISM staff, ISM Board, Washington State Senators and Representatives that worked so diligently on behalf of the ISM to get the HSSA bill passed. Countless hours were put in by the ISM's lobbyists; Joe King and Jeff Gombosky, as well as the ISM's champions of the bill, Senator Lisa Brown, Senator Chris Marr, Rep. Timm Ormsby and Rep. Don Barlow. With their dedication and tireless effort, the HSSA is now a reality.



From left: John Driscoll (Project Access), Senator Lisa Brown, Tom Paine (Avista), Dr. Sam Sellinger (Project Access), Gov. Gregoire, Lewis Rumpler (ISM), John Stone (ISM Board Chair), Rep. Don Barlow, Rep. Timm Ormsby, Jeff Nelson (ISM Board member), and Senator Chris Marr.

ISM/Project Access Collaboration

Project Access, a doctor-led nonprofit organization in Spokane, had teamed up with the ISM in lobbying for the HSSA. Together, the ISM and Project Access fought hard for the HSSA bill to be passed. If Spokane County is chosen for the HSSA, a partnership has been formed between the ISM and Project Access to jointly receive the money that will become available.

Project Access has a collaborative partnership of 845 volunteer physicians, health care practitioners, all of Spokane County's hospitals, and pharmacists. Project Access provides comprehensive medical care to low income, uninsured county residents. Under the terms of the ISM/Project Access agreement, if Spokane County is chosen to receive the HSSA funds, Project Access will receive money to fund this much needed organization that helps thousands of Spokane residents receive the medical care they desperately need but cannot afford.



ISM Adds New Board members

Earlier this year, the ISM welcomed two new members to the ISM Planning Authority Board. We are delighted to have Elaine Couture, Chief Operating Office at Sacred Heart Medical Center, and Dr. Stefan Humphries, Medical Director at St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center. Both Dr. Humphries and Mrs. Couture bring a wealth of scientific and medical knowledge to the ISM board. The ISM staff and fellow board members are honored to have them represent us.



Elaine Couture



Dr. Stefan Humphries

AAAS Review Conducted on ISM

In May of 2007, a unique review was conducted on the ISM . The American Association for the Advancement of Science, or the AAAS, flew in several distinguished and world renown scientists to study the concept of the ISM. The AAAS review team consisted of team leader Maria Vassileva, Dr. Huntington Willard from Duke University, Dr. Chris Capelli from the MD Anderson Research Clinic, Dr. Lyle Bootman from the University of Arizona, Dr. Bruce Holm from SUNY Buffalo, Dr. Barbara Knowles from Jackson Laboratories, and Dr. James Wilson from University of Texas Southwest Medical Center.

Peer review is a cornerstone of science and integrity in research. The ISM and our partners will use the report to help hire top notch scientists and staff and to help secure local, state and federal funding to conduct research. Thank you to all our board, partner, and community leaders who took the time to meet with the reviewers.



ISM Awarded Federal Appropriations

The ISM, in collaboration with Dr. Michael Skinner from WSU, has been awarded a \$500,000 appropriation from the Department of Defense. The purpose of the appropriations is for Dr. Skinner and his team of scientists at WSU to study the effects of environmental agents on War Fighter health in the Iraq theater of operations.



Dr. Michael Skinner

Dr. Skinner will also conduct research to identify the epigenetic biomarkers that signal disease states, identify the environmental exposure that cause the disease state, and develop therapeutics to treat and prevent the disease. The ISM was very fortunate to receive this appropriation as few if any research projects were supported in the final Defense Appropriations bill.

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Steve Griffiths, CEO, Jobs Plus

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Congresswoman Cathy McMorris
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