

April 26, 2007  
For Immediate Release

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### **Washington Legislature passes Health Sciences and Services Authority (HSSA) legislation**

Spokane, WA – In a major legislative victory that will infuse eastern Washington with funding for bio-tech research and health services, the Washington State Legislature passed the HSSA bill with strong bipartisan support. The legislation was supported by the Institute for Systems Medicine and Project Access.

“We want to thank our local delegation for their support and advocacy, in particular Senate Majority Leader Lisa Brown, Senator Chris Marr and Representative Don Barlow. The legislation gives ISM the opportunity to compete for significant funding to build a world-class scientific institute here in Spokane. ISM has a strong and compelling case that meets the requirements of the HSSA legislation,” said John Stone, ISMPA Board Chair.

“When we are successful in securing the funding, Project Access will be able to continue its mission to provide specialty medical services to uninsured residents in Spokane County. We are very appreciative of the support the program has received from Gov. Chris Gregoire and our Legislature. We look forward to this opportunity to strengthen Spokane’s health care safety net by presenting our program’s vital contributions to the HEC Board,” stated John Driscoll, Project Access Executive Director.

ISM is a newly forming private medical research institute utilizing systems biology, genomics, computational biology and the medical and academic resources in eastern Washington to conduct basic research leading to new diagnostics and therapeutics improving patient outcomes. ISM founding partners and sponsors include: Washington State University, Gonzaga University, Empire Health Services, Providence Health Care, the Institute for Systems Biology, the State of Washington, Spokane County and Avista Corporation.

Project Access, a volunteer network of over 800 physicians, area hospitals and other health care providers, donates medical services to uninsured, low-income residents of Spokane County. Since its inception in 2003, the program has provided over \$9 million in medical care to uninsured people in Spokane County.