



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 19, 2009**

**Contact:**

Laura Lowery

206-799-5604

[llovery@apcoworldwide.com](mailto:llovery@apcoworldwide.com)

**“Council for American Medical Innovation” Debuts With Roundtable Discussion in Washington, D.C., Amid Calls for Focus on Economic Growth, Finding Cures**

*Former Rep. Richard Gephardt, Dr. Francis Collins, and other thought leaders in health policy suggest America innovates its way out of health and economic challenges facing the country*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 19, 2009) – A new coalition of leaders in research, medicine, patient advocacy, academia, education, labor and business today announced they are joining together to form the *Council for American Medical Innovation* – a working partnership that will urge Congress to adopt a national policy agenda that facilitates medical innovation and discoveries in the life sciences. As part of the public announcement of the Council, several of its leaders met at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., for a panel discussion on the importance of American medical innovation to the economy and to patients in need of a cure for cancer and other life-threatening conditions.

“American leadership in medical innovation must be part of our economic recovery plan,” said Former Representative Dick Gephardt, a founding member of the Council and moderator of today’s discussion. “It has a direct impact on job growth, U.S. competitiveness and the health of all Americans. The future belongs to those who can create and sustain innovation economies, and we must work now to put policies in place that will nurture medical innovation, protect America’s ability to maintain its global leadership position and help us find cures.”

Gephardt and the other panelists at today’s event, including Dr. Francis Collins, former director of the National Human Genome Research Institute at the NIH; Dr. Edward Benz, CEO of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; Billy Tauzin, President and CEO of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA); and Marc Boutin of the National Health Council all shared the idea that America’s future prosperity will largely depend on maintaining a lead role in scientific, technological and medical innovation.

The United States has historically led the world in medical innovation and scientific discovery, but that lead is slipping. According to a 2007 report from the Council on Competitiveness, in the past 25 years:

- The U.S. share of global R&D investment declined from 46% to 37%
- The U.S. share of global patents decreased from 54% to 52%
- The U.S. share of scientific publications fell from 38% to 30%
- The U.S. share of scientific researchers fell from 41% to 29%
- The number of bachelor's degrees in science and engineering in the U.S. decreased by 10%
- The number of new doctorates in science and engineering in the U.S. decreased 30%

A study released last month by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF) found that while the United States currently ranks sixth among 40 countries and regions in innovation and competitiveness, it placed **last** in terms of progress made over the last decade. Singapore, Sweden, Luxembourg, Denmark and South Korea now outrank the U.S.

“Science and technology have contributed more than half of U.S. economic growth since World War II,” said Francis Collins, M.D. Ph.D., former director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, NIH. “But we’ve allowed that to slip. We need a bold and coordinated plan of action to prepare our children for careers in innovation, provide support to scientific research and get our economy back on track.”

In his recent address to Congress, President Obama called for a stimulus package that “will launch a new effort to conquer a disease that has touched the life of nearly every American by seeking a cure for cancer in our time.” The Council for American Medical Innovation is answering that call and seeks to promote policies that will nurture innovation in the United States, and support the science and research needed to meet the President’s noble goal.

“In order to strengthen medical innovation, improve the health of Americans, and achieve President Obama’s goal of curing cancer in our lifetime, Congress must adopt an aggressive national policy agenda on medical innovation,” said Billy Tauzin, President and CEO of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. “American businesses must be innovative in order to succeed in the competitive global economy. We must support their innovation with policies that provide more funding for research, sensible immigration laws that make room for the world’s best minds, tax incentives for innovation and policies that protect the fruit of innovators’ labor - their intellectual property.”

The mission of the Council for American Medical Innovation is to work in partnership to:

- Educate the public about the importance of medical innovation in the U.S. and its impact on the economy, health and well being of the nation;

- Drive a comprehensive public policy agenda that advances medical innovation and progress; and
- Encourage policymakers to make meaningful changes on critical issues related to medical innovation.

A key outcome that the Council for American Medical Innovation hopes to achieve is a broad medical innovation policy agenda. This consensus-based plan would address how policies can:

- Attract companies and well-paying jobs to the U.S.
- Promote risk-taking in research and development
- Encourage more students to participate in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education
- Attract the best and brightest researchers to the U.S.
- Support basic scientific research and development

Members of the Council include: AdvaMed, ALS Association, American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology, American Academy for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Association of Clinical Research Organizations, Cleveland Clinic, National Health Council, National Organization for Rare Disorders, Parkinson's Action Network, RetireSafe and Whitman-Walker Clinic.

The Council is governed by an advisory board, including: Marc Boutin, JD, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, National Health Council; David Heil, former host of PBS series 'Newton's Apple'; Nancy L. Johnson, Senior Public Policy Advisor, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC, and former Chairwoman of the House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee; David Nash, MD, MBA, Founding Dean, Jefferson School of Health Policy and Population Health at Thomas Jefferson University; Amy Comstock Rick, Chief Executive Officer, Parkinson's Action Network; Elizabeth Teisberg, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Virginia Darden Graduate School of Business; and Vivek Wadhwa, Fellow with the Labor and Worklife Program at Harvard Law School and Executive in Residence/Adjunct Professor at the Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University.

"We are dependent on a strong environment for medical innovation as we stake out new territory in the fight against cancer and for the health and well-being of all Americans," said Dr. Edward Benz Jr., CEO of the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. "Research means hope for millions of patients and families, and medical innovation creates the cures and miracles of science that help keep Americans healthy and thriving."

For more information on the Council for American Medical Innovation, visit [www.americanmedicalinnovation.org](http://www.americanmedicalinnovation.org).

###