

1750 OCEAN PARK BOULEVARD, #200, SANTA MONICA, CA 90405 - 4938
TEL: 310-392-0522 • FAX: 310-392-8874 • NET: CONSUMERWATCHDOG.ORG

April 28, 2006

Dr. Zach Hall
President
California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM)
210 King St.
San Francisco, CA
94107

Dear Dr. Hall:

Thank you for your letter and assurance that no CIRM scientific staff members will take part in private scientific briefings for large donors to the gala "Reach for Tomorrow, Research Today" fundraiser to benefit CIRM. I appreciate your clear statement that "such private briefings by CIRM staff would be improper and we have not, and would not consider such an arrangement."

I am pleased to post your letter clarifying the situation on our Web site.

As I explained, representatives of the black-tie gala told me -- in writing via e-mail, copies of which are attached -- that CIRM scientific staff would provide the briefings to people buying tickets for \$5,000 or \$10,000.

Although it is reassuring to learn that CIRM will not offer private briefings, your position as an honorary chair of the event, along with your colleagues Robert Klein, ICOC chairman, and Ed Penhoet, ICOC vice chairman, continues to create an inappropriate appearance that donors have privileged access to top ICOC and CIRM officials.

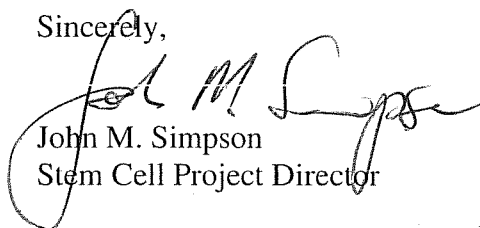
You write that the black-tie gala will not accept corporate contributions from biotechnology or pharmaceutical firms and that the names of donors to the gala will be made available to CIRM, where they will be available to the public. This is exactly the public disclosure that is necessary and that we continue to insist upon.

Finally you write that the donations from the gala will be handled in accordance with the CIRM Policy and Procedure on Accepting Real and Personal Property and Naming passed at the April 6, 2006, ICOC meeting. That procedure provides that gifts under \$3 million may be approved by unanimous action of the executive committee, comprising you, Mr. Klein and Dr. Penhoet. Unless the benefit is hugely successful, the three of you could accept the donations and the issue would not come before the full ICOC.

But the three of you are serving as honorary chairs of the fundraiser and have already given the benefit your enthusiastic endorsement. To avoid a conflict, you must suspend the \$3 million floor for donations requiring board consideration and insist that this be discussed by the full ICOC board.

I know you and your scientific colleagues are seeking to act with the utmost integrity in overseeing the allocation of \$6 billion in taxpayer funds. That is precisely why it is so important that the avoidance of even the appearance of a conflict is critical. All of us who believe in CIRM's potential and stem cell research would be better served if you were not associated with the gala.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Simpson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being particularly prominent and stylized.

John M. Simpson
Stem Cell Project Director

cc: Independent Citizens Oversight Committee

April 26, 2006

John M. Simpson
1750 Ocean Park Blvd., #200
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Dear Mr. Simpson,

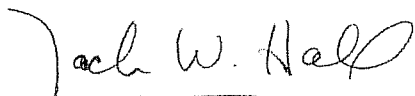
I am writing to respond to several issues that you have raised in your letters and press releases with respect to the "Reach for Tomorrow, Research Today" Gala to benefit the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

First, as I stated in my telephone call to you, there has never been at CIRM any discussion of, or knowledge of, "private scientific briefings that..... will involve senior CIRM staff" for top level donors. The first we heard of this was from your letters and press releases. Such private briefings by CIRM staff would be improper and we have not, and would not, consider such an arrangement. We ask that you acknowledge that this charge is incorrect and that you correct the inaccurate information on your web site. My understanding from the organizers of the Gala is that donors are to be invited to briefings and tours at UCSF and Stanford University.

Second, the names of donors to the Gala will be made available to CIRM, where they will be available to the public. These donations will be handled in accordance with the CIRM Policy and Procedure on Accepting Real and Personal Property and Naming, passed by the ICOC on April 6, 2006. In addition, please note that the Gala Committee will not accept corporate contributions from biotechnology or pharmaceutical firms. Per the above mentioned gift policy, CIRM is unable to accept such gifts.

Finally, CIRM is very appreciative of the volunteer efforts of the entire Gala Committee to raise funds to support our scientific programs. It is an expression of our gratitude and an indication of our support to those who are willing to step forward at this critical moment in the history of CIRM that Bob Klein, Ed Penhoet and I have agreed to be honorary co-chairs for the Gala. Such efforts allow the work of CIRM in following the voters' mandate to develop a stem cell research program in California that will lead to therapies for chronic disease and injury.

Sincerely,



Zach W. Hall, PhD
President and Chief Scientific Officer

Cc: Robert Klein; Edward Penhoet; Debra Strobin



John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>

Stem Cell Benefit

6 messages

John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>

Mon, Apr 10, 2006 at 3:38 PM

To: charlesz@charleszukow.com

Dear Mr. Zukow,

I see that some sponsorship packages for the "Reach For Tomorrow, Research Today" gala to benefit CIRM include a private scientific briefing.

Could you please tell me what that involves? For instance, who would be doing the briefing and where would it be?

Thank you very much.

--

John M. Simpson
1713 Rockefeller Lane
Redondo Beach, CA
90278
Tel: 310-374-2901
E-mail: jomasimp@gmail.com

Charles Zukow <charlesz@charleszukow.com>

Mon, Apr 10, 2006 at 8:08 PM

To: John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>

Mr. Simpson -

I'm in the process of getting you that information. I should be able to pass it on tom'w.

Are you with the media? If so, which outlet?

Also, out of curiosity, how did you get my email?

best,
charly

From: John Simpson [<mailto:jomasimp@gmail.com>]

Sent: Mon 4/10/2006 6:38 PM

To: Charles Zukow

Subject: Stem Cell Benefit

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

--

No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.1.385 / Virus Database: 268.4.1/307 - Release Date: 4/10/2006

John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>
To: Charles Zukow <charlesz@charleszukow.com>

Tue, Apr 11, 2006 at 4:02 PM

Charly,

I'm with the Foundation for Taxpayer and Consumer rights in Santa Monica. Used to be with USA TODAY where I was Deputy Editor and ran its international edition.

These days in my role at FTCR, I write the occasional op-ed piece. The most recent ones were in the Chronicle and Mercury News arguing that IP rules for Prop 71-funded research need to provide for the public benefit.

Best,
John

[Quoted text hidden]

--

[Quoted text hidden]

Charles Zukow <charlesz@charleszukow.com>
To: John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 12, 2006 at 11:04 AM

John -

To answer your question, they will receive an introduction to the rudimentaries of stem cell research by someone from CIRM's scientific team. The details will be information that is already public.

Do let me know if you have any additional questions.

Best,
charly

-----Original Message-----

From: John Simpson [mailto:jomasimp@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2006 4:02 PM
To: Charles Zukow

[Quoted text hidden]

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No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.1.385 / Virus Database: 268.4.1/308 - Release Date: 4/11/2006

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No virus found in this outgoing message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

Version: 7.1.385 / Virus Database: 268.4.1/310 - Release Date: 4/12/2006

John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>
To: Charles Zukow <charlesz@charleszukow.com>

Wed, Apr 12, 2006 at 12:12 PM

Thank you very much.

[Quoted text hidden]

Charles Zukow <charlesz@charleszukow.com>

Wed, Apr 12, 2006 at 12:18 PM

To: John Simpson <jomasimp@gmail.com>

No problem.
charly

-----Original Message-----

From: John Simpson [mailto:jomasimp@gmail.com]

[Quoted text hidden]

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No virus found in this incoming message.

Checked by AVG Free Edition.

[Quoted text hidden]
