



Media Contact:
Kelly Cahill
(410) 504-8312
kcahill@mghus.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission Elects New Chair, Vice Chair

COLUMBIA, Md. (July 19, 2013) – The Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission (Commission) today announced that it has elected Rabbi Avram Israel Reisner as chair and Dr. David Mosser as vice chair. Rabbi Reisner, who holds a doctorate in Talmud and rabbinics as well as a master's degree in bioethics, serves the Congregation Chevrei Tzedek in Baltimore. He was appointed to the Commission by Governor Martin O'Malley in 2010. Rabbi Reisner succeeds Margaret Conn Himelfarb, MPH, who served for three years as chair of the Commission.

"Rabbi Reisner is a passionate medical research advocate. I congratulate him for being appointed to this leadership position within the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Under the direction of Margaret Conn Himelfarb, the Commission achieved national and international recognition for its robust funding of stem cell research. I thank Margaret for her outstanding leadership and look forward to the Fund continuing to attract the best and brightest stem cell researchers to Maryland under Rabbi Reisner's tenure."

Rabbi Reisner was unanimously selected to the position at the Commission's July 18 meeting. In addition to his role as rabbi of the Congregation Chevrei Tzedek, he is a visiting adjunct professor of interfaith studies at the Ecumenical Institute of Theology of St. Mary's Seminary & University. Rabbi Reisner is a longstanding member of the Conservative Movement's Committee of Jewish Law and Standards, authoring responses on topics such as end-of-life care and genetically modified foods. Rabbi Reisner was awarded the Daniel Jeremy Silver Fellowship for research in 2010-11 by the Center for Jewish Studies at Harvard University. He served as an appointee of Gov. O'Malley to the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission for three years prior to being elected chair, and currently serves on the Institutional Review Board at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore.

"I am very honored to serve as chair of the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission after having observed the high standards of research funding, oversight and advocacy set by my predecessors," said Rabbi Reisner. "I look forward to working with TEDCO and the members of the Commission to maximize the scientific and economic impacts of the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund for the state of Maryland. The past and future achievements of those able to study stem cell therapy through the Fund will continue to advance our understanding and ability to prevent and treat debilitating diseases."

Dr. Mosser is a professor of cell biology and molecular genetics at the University of Maryland, College Park, and the founding director of the Maryland Pathogen Research Institute. He received his Ph.D. from North Carolina State University and completed his postdoctoral training

at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Mosser is a former member of the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases board of scientific counselors, and has served on the editorial boards of five academic journals.

In FY 2013, the Commission awarded 31 stem cell research grants. With a budget of \$10.4 million for FY 2014, the Commission expects to issue formal Requests for Applications (RFAs) in late September 2013. It will also host the sixth Annual Maryland Stem Cell Research Symposium on Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2013, at the Johns Hopkins Medical campus in Baltimore. For more information on the symposium and other stem cell related events, please visit www.mscref.org.

About the Maryland Stem Cell Research Commission

The Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund (MSCRF) was established by the State of Maryland under the Maryland Stem Cell Research Act of 2006 to promote State-funded stem cell research and cures through grants and loans to public and private entities in the State. Administered by the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO), the MSCRF is overseen by an independent commission that sets policy and develops criteria, standards and requirements for applications to the Fund. The current MSCRF budget for FY2014 is \$10.4 million. For more information about the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and a list of Commission members, please visit www.mscref.org.

#