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## **Gov. Perry Announces Grant to Help Create Institute for Genomic Medicine**

*\$50 Million Award to Bring 5,000 New Jobs, Spur Biotech Industry*

HOUSTON – Gov. Rick Perry today announced a \$50 million Texas Enterprise Fund grant to help create the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine (TIGM), a pioneering research institution that will help make Texas an international focal point for medical research and foster job growth in the life science industry.

The funds are being awarded to Lexicon Genetics and the Texas A&M University System, which are forming the non-profit TIGM.

“I am proud that Texas is committing \$50 million from the Enterprise Fund to help establish the Texas Institute for Genomic Medicine, a groundbreaking genetics research center that will bring 5,000 new jobs to Texas, attract millions of new dollars for medical research and lead to the development of life-saving medical treatments and therapies,” Perry said.

Lexicon will use \$35 million of the Enterprise Fund grant to create two copies of its mouse cell line library and provide them to TIGM. One will be housed at the Texas A&M University System Health Science Center’s Institute of Biosciences and Technology (IBT) in Houston and another at a new facility to be built in College Station at Texas A&M University. Lexicon also will provide TIGM with software needed to manage and analyze its patented gene knockout technology.

The A&M System will use the remaining \$15 million to build the new facilities in College Station and remodel IBT facilities; Texas A&M will also manage the daily operations of the Institute.

TIGM is designed to pioneer the development of medical breakthroughs, accelerate the pace of medical discoveries and foster the development of the biotechnology industry in Texas. It will prioritize research in such areas as diabetes and obesity, infectious diseases, heart disease and cancer.

TIGM will conduct its research through a license to use Lexicon's gene knockout technology, which allows scientists to study functions of individual genes and develop drugs to treat diseases.

Perry likened the impact of the Lexicon-A&M partnership to the efforts of a group of university researchers, industry leaders and government officials who, more than 40 years ago, began working together on a revolutionary system of communication – a “galactic network” of computers linked by telephone lines that could connect people across vast distances.

“That visionary partnership eventually gave rise not only to the Internet, but to our modern economy and countless technological innovations that have made life better for human beings around the globe,” Perry said.

The \$50 million grant matches the largest amount Texas has ever awarded from the Enterprise Fund for a single project.

“It is a wise investment for taxpayers because the Institute for Genomic Medicine will leverage the talents and resources of the public and private sectors to yield tremendous benefits to the entire state,” Perry said.

TIGM will be home to the world's largest library of genetically-altered mouse cell lines that have been called the “gold standard” in genetic research because approximately 99 percent of all human genes have a counterpart in the mouse genome.

“To view this project as a purely intellectual endeavor or as an item of interest only to the scientific community would be to miss its practical and greatest significance,” Perry said.

TIGM's libraries and resources will be available to researchers from universities across Texas and will also be open to members of the private sector who will use the knowledge gained at the Institute to develop new treatments for chronic medical conditions and even new vaccines that can protect Americans from acts of bio-terrorism.

“TIGM's ultimate goal is not to study mice but to cure man,” Perry said. “And based on early projections, breakthrough biotech discoveries are expected in three to five years.”

As part of the Enterprise Fund grant, over the next decade TIGM will create 5,000 new jobs in Texas with an average salary of \$60,000.

Perry said the economic benefits will be felt throughout the state as existing biotech firms in Texas expand to capitalize on discoveries from TIGM labs and out-of-state employers relocate jobs to Texas to be near the world's premiere genetic research facility. And one of TIGM's top priorities will be to help start-up companies commercialize new developments, so they can get their businesses off the ground faster and create more jobs.

TIGM will also help Texas attract millions more in federal and private research dollars. The National Institute of Health has prioritized this type of mouse genome research as one of the most promising for creating the next generation of medical treatments.

"With TIGM, Texas is now at the front of the line for public and private genetic research grants." Perry said.

"By investing taxpayer dollars in high-tech research and development projects like TIGM, Texas stands to reap economic and scientific benefits far greater than the money spent up front."