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Westly Taps Stanford Dean for Stem-Cell Oversight Committee

SACRAMENTO – State Controller Steve Westly today appointed the dean of Stanford’s Medical School to help oversee stem-cell research in California.

Westly named Dr. Philip A. Pizzo to the Independent Citizen’s Oversight Committee that will govern the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine established by Proposition 71.

“Dr. Pizzo is a world-recognized leader in medicine and biomedical research. I know that he will help ensure that Californian's investment in stem cell research will be spent wisely on the science with the highest likelihood of producing cures for diseases,” Westly said. "I am confident that the investment California is making will serve as a magnet to bring the best researchers in the world to our state and that the long term benefits to our economy will be significant.”

Dr. Pizzo has been dean of the Stanford School of Medicine since April 2001. Before joining Stanford, he was physician-in-chief of Children’s Hospital in Boston and chair of the Department of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School. He also held several leadership positions at the National Cancer Institute’s infectious disease, pediatric and clinical sciences divisions.

Leading medical organizations have honored Dr. Pizzo’s contributions as a clinical investigator, especially treating children’s cancer and HIV. The U.S. Public Health Service awarded him the 1995 Outstanding Service Medal Award. He holds an MD from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and a bachelor’s degree from Fordham University.

“I am honored to accept Controller Westly's invitation to serve on the Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee. The Institute for Regenerative Medicine will bring new funds to a field of research that has shown the potential to change the way we understand and treat disease," said Dr. Pizzo. "Passage of the proposition is a clear affirmation that the citizens of California value this area of scientific investigation. I look forward to serving in this important endeavor.”

Controller Westly will make five appointments to the citizen’s committee and nominate two people to serve as chair and vice-chair. Westly will also serve as a member of a second panel established by the initiative, the Citizen’s financial Accountability Oversight Committee, and appoint one of its members. Appointees serve six-year terms with a maximum of two terms.

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