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In Support of HB434

To: Ohio House Finance Committee


I am writing to express my strong support for HB434, the formation of the Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Accelerator (TBITXL) Pilot Program. My name is Dr. William Korinek and I am the Co-Founder and CEO of [Astrocyte Pharmaceuticals](#), a clinical-stage traumatic brain injury (TBI) pharmaceutical research company located in Groton, Connecticut. I earned my Ph.D. from Harvard University's Molecular and Cellular Biology Department, and previously, was the Vice President of Worldwide R&D Business Operations at Pfizer. At Astrocyte, we have been conducting research on a promising TBI therapeutic for almost 10 years and are now finally on the verge of conducting a definitive Phase 2 study in TBI patients to determine its true efficacy for these individuals. Conducting R&D on potential TBI therapeutics is currently a long and meandering journey, and many ideas and companies fail unnecessarily due to the long and varied road needed to perform key de-risking early studies.

TBIs are distressingly common and a leading cause of disability worldwide. Alarmingly, 1 in 4 people will sustain a traumatic brain injury in their lifetime and it is often the cause of many neurological and behavioral health problems we see in the community today. Unfortunately, very few venture groups or pharmaceutical companies are investing in TBI treatments because of the costs and expertise needed to demonstrate early animal efficacy data that provides the foundation for further commercial development. In addition, only 20% of scientists who apply for a grant at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are awarded one each year. While multiple promising therapeutic ideas are emerging, more resources are needed to assess these ideas, determine the potential benefits, and provide a stepping stone toward proving the treatment in clinical studies.

Ohio has considerable expertise and resources in TBI research and this is an opportunity for the state to take a leadership role and build a center of excellence. Your bipartisan bill would provide much-needed research and development capabilities and infrastructure to advance life-saving therapies. This program would answer many scientists' and corporations' needs to gain access to more funding and resources. In addition, this collaborative initiative is a great one-stop-shop solution where out-of-state scientists studying TBI can test their compounds at facilities in Ohio to gain access to the vast scientific knowledge and tools this initiative would provide.

The Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment Accelerator Pilot Program will stimulate innovation and position Ohio to lead in the development of targeted therapies against TBI. I strongly recommend you support this forward-thinking and unique research proposal that can have a tremendous benefit to many, many people in Ohio, and around the world.

Sincerely,



William S. Korinek, Ph.D.
CEO, Astrocyte Pharmaceuticals