

News from Bizwire, Dallas News, Forbes.com, and Morning Star.com:

CIMIT Hosts State Senators Jack Hart and Richard T. Moore During Fact-Finding Mission on Technologies to Improve Health Care

Cambridge: October 21, 2005 -- CIMIT was host recently to two Massachusetts State Senators who were gathering information regarding innovative technologies. Senator Jack Hart, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technology and Senator Richard T. Moore, Chairman of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, visited CIMIT to learn how collaborative teams successfully overcome barriers to bringing new technology to health care – from bench to bedside. CIMIT, the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology, is a Partners HealthCare consortium of Harvard teaching hospitals with MIT and Draper Laboratory.

Senator Moore Spearheading Technology Effort

Senator Moore has proposed legislation (SB 275) that would establish a Massachusetts Advanced Technologies in Healthcare Trust Fund. This bill would provide funding to support the development and use of advanced technologies in health care by Massachusetts-based institutions and companies. Senator Moore is working to have the bill's language included in an economic stimulus package that the Legislature hopes to pass before it recesses on November 16.

Senator Moore has been involved in establishing the Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety, legislation to permit



Sen. Jack Hart (left) and Sen. Richard T. Moore (right) take turns using CELTS, a project that simulates suturing to train laparoscopic surgeons.

electronic prescribing, the Patient Bill of Rights, *MassMedLine* drug information and referral service, and the reorganization of health-related licensing boards. After visiting CIMIT he said: “I’m very impressed with what they are doing there. This kind of innovation is helping people across the State, across the nation.”

Senator Hart’s Interest in Scientific Innovation

Senator Hart’s committee considers matters that include the development and retention of science and technology-intensive industries, innovation systems from research to development, biotechnology, stem cell research, medical technology, medical devices, and other similar fields. Senator Hart recently designed legislation to encourage closely regulated embryonic stem cell research, as well as the introduction of an economic stimulus bill that included

emerging technology and health care as one of its five major targets.

At CIMIT, Sen. Hart had the opportunity to work on a Simulation project called Computer Enhanced Laparoscopic Training System (CELTS), which offers a practical simulated approach to helping laparoscopic surgeons master the art of suturing. After trying this hands-on device and attempting to suture on his own, he echoed the sentiment of the simulation team: “Now I understand why this is such an advance. Traditionally in medicine, you learn on animals and cadavers. That’s not good enough. This is state of the art.”

CIMIT: Bringing together Science and Technology

Since its inception, CIMIT has been bringing together clinicians from “problem-rich environments” with a desire to improve patient care, with technologists from “solution-rich environments” who have the expertise to design novel devices. According to CIMIT Director John A. Parrish, MD, “As a clinically-centered consortium we draw upon the strengths of clinicians, inventors, engineers, industry leaders, scientists, and the military. It is an idea that works. By acting as a bridge, we have shown that one investigator’s idea, coupled with a team of experts, and nurtured in an environment of collaboration can create multiple uses, multiple partners, and multiple programs to address complex patient care problems.”

The CIMIT Visit

In addition to learning about Medical Education Simulation, the senators also heard from CIMIT program leaders in

Image-Guided Therapy, the Industry Liaison Program, Technology Implementation, and Wireless Physiological Monitoring. Additionally they learned of work in Optical Coherence Tomography of which one use of this laser technology is to identify certain coronary plaques that are thought to cause acute heart attacks. They also heard of work being done at the Operating Room of the Future to which both senators remarked: “The training techniques are great. This is cutting edge stuff. It’s fascinating.”

The meeting was hosted by Dr. Parrish, Ronald Newbower, PhD, Chair, CIMIT Strategic Planning Council and Colleen Kigin, DPT, CIMIT Chief of Staff.

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