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**SITC Members Participate in Rally for Medical Research to
Support Cancer Immunotherapy**

Member representatives among more than 18,000 in attendance to support biomedical research

MILWAUKEE, WI - Thousands of people, including member representatives from the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) gathered today on the Carnegie Library grounds in Washington DC to participate in the Rally for Medical Research. A unified call to action was made to raise awareness among members of Congress and the general public about the critical need for a sustained investment for the funding of medical research including cancer immunotherapy.

"This was an unprecedented show of solidarity between more than 18,000 patients, advocacy groups, researchers, physicians, government officials, and celebrities – all in support of increasing funding for biomedical research," Dr. Thomas Gajewski, immediate past president of SITC and rally attendee, said. "Data shows that money invested in the field is directly linked to the stimulus of our economy," he continued.

This is the first time such a large group of people have come together in a public way to express their support, inspire more hope, and save lives.

"The energy at the rally is much like the energy driving the field of cancer immunotherapy right now," Dr. Leisha Emens, SITC member and another rally attendee, said. "We have unraveled some of the mysteries about the immune response to cancer, and stand ready to make a major impact on the lives of cancer patients. Increasing support for biomedical research is critical for more clinical progress, and creating a future that is cancer-free."

As federal funding for medical research and cancer immunotherapy continues to decline, this rally called upon the nation's policymakers to make life-saving medical research funding a national priority. As the field of cancer immunotherapy continues to grow and show promise towards becoming one for the four treatment options for patients with cancer, federal funding to support research and clinical trials has never been more important.

Recently, the first-ever positive results in a phase three oncological virus cancer immunotherapy study in melanoma were announced, as well as news of immunotherapy treatments producing remission for the first time in adult patients with acute leukemia. These along with several other advancements in the field, show the importance cancer immunotherapy holds and the necessity for continued funding for research in the field.

“We have seen major advances in the adoption of immunotherapy for the treatment of several human cancers in the past two years,” Dr. Howard Kaufman, SITC Vice President, said. “The direct impact for patients can be enormous since immunotherapy can be associated with long term response. Continued research is critical to support efforts at understanding how immunotherapy works and promoting the rapid translation of basic research into clinical outcomes.”

If you did not attend the rally, you can still make a difference and show your support for the funding of medical research and cancer immunotherapy by calling, writing, or emailing your congressional offices and making your voice heard. Along with SITC, you can help advance the field of cancer immunotherapy and change the lives of those affected by cancer.

Founded in 1984, the Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (formerly the International Society for Biological Therapy of Cancer; iSBTc) is a non-profit organization of clinicians, researchers, students, post-doctoral fellows, and allied health professionals dedicated to improving cancer patient outcomes by advancing the development and application of cancer immunotherapy through interaction, innovation and leadership. For more information about SITC, please visit the Society website at www.sitcancer.org

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