

(Cranbury, N.J.) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) today joined officials of VaxInnate to celebrate the company’s success in securing a federal contract to fund development of the next generation of vaccines to fight the flu and other pandemics.

“New Jerseyans can be proud that groundbreaking scientific research and development is taking place here in Central New Jersey,” Rep. Holt said. “Continued investment in innovative biomedical research is crucial to protecting the public from flu pandemics and potential bioterrorism threats. Replacing the current slow, expensive egg-based manufacturing of flu vaccines is long overdue. VaxInnate’s research in Cranbury holds the promise of enabling us to modernize and speed up production of vaccines to better protect Americans’ health.”

The contract, worth up to \$196 million over five years, was awarded to VaxInnate by the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), to fund the development of seasonal and pandemic flu vaccines using recombinant technology.

VaxInnate produces highly immunogenic vaccines using a unique technology platform that effectively activates both the innate and adaptive immune systems. This technology – based upon recombinant expression of fusion molecules that combine the vaccine antigen with a potent immune stimulator, the toll-like receptor 5 (TLR-5) agonist, flagellin – conveys significant potency, speed, cost and capacity advantages.

VaxInnate’s technology makes it possible to produce hundreds of millions of vaccine doses in as little as three to four months. In a pandemic, the speed and capacity of this technology makes it possible to supply the “first” and “last” doses of vaccine needed by the nation in several months. This is a significant improvement compared to time necessary to produce flu vaccines in either eggs or cell culture; using eggs or cell culture, only first doses of vaccine can be produced in this same time frame.

Rep. Holt was joined by representatives of BARDA, Bio NJ and other guests, who toured VaxInnate’s headquarters and laboratories in Cranbury.

“We thank Congressman Holt both for his tireless efforts to represent the life sciences sector in the 12th District and for being a champion of innovation,” said Thomas Hofstaetter, PhD, President and CEO of VaxInnate. “This contract, which is an endorsement of VaxInnate’s proprietary technology, represents another significant milestone for us as a company. We look forward to working with BARDA to develop the next generation of vaccines to prevent seasonal and pandemic flu.”

“This award is an excellent example of government support of economic development at its best, where technology, innovation and the economy advance together. With access to capital a continuing challenge, both the State and federal government need to help fill that gap,” said Debbie Hart, President of BioNJ. “We salute Congressman Holt for his leadership in promoting innovation in the biotechnology industry and congratulate VaxInnate on this important milestone.”

#