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## Department of Surgery

[Redacted]

February 24, [Redacted]

Scientific Review Committee  
Gilead Solid Tumors Program

Dear Members of the Scientific Review Panel,

I write regarding Dr. [Redacted] application for the Gilead Solid Tumors Program 2 [Redacted], entitled "[Redacted]". Dr. [Redacted] is a young surgeon-scientist and an excellent candidate for this funding. He completed his surgical oncology training almost 6 years ago. The Department of Surgery and the [Redacted] have committed to his development as a surgeon-scientist providing him with 50% protected research time with independent laboratory and office space.

Dr. [Redacted] and I began collaborating 3 years ago on [Redacted] cancer. My laboratory is well known for the use of multiphoton intravital imaging (MPIVI) to study breast cancer invasion and metastasis at single cell resolution in living mice. The development of microscopes and imaging windows for MPIVI is supported by the Biophotonics Center at [Redacted] which I co-direct. I have a long training record and have mentored students, clinical fellows and post-doctoral fellows, junior faculty and have taught numerous courses in optics, histology, general biology, cancer and cell biology and physiology. Since 2006, I have mentored 26 post-doctoral fellows and 16 Ph.D. and M.D./Ph.D. students and 8 clinical fellows pursuing clinical or translational research related to cancer, and 10 junior faculty. I was awarded the [Redacted] Mentoring Award in 2011.

Dr. [Redacted] is developing an independent research program to study invasion and metastasis during PDAC progression which is of great interest to me. In this regard I have been mentoring Dr. [Redacted] during the development of his research program to apply single cell resolution MPIVI to PDAC. This mentorship involves training in MPIVI, support of his adoption and refinement of PDAC MPIVI imaging windows in mice, and operation of the NCI T32 "Training of Surgeon Scientists in Basic and Translational Research" of which I am the PI, and in which Dr. [Redacted] leads the Faculty Advisors Program and the training of T32 fellows. To support these activities, Dr. [Redacted] has been assigned independent laboratory space, office and conference

space and Biophotonics Center resources which are available from the Department of Surgery, in which I am Professor and Director of Basic and Translational Research (BTR). I have reviewed Dr. [REDACTED] attached application and confirm that the resources in the BTR, the Biophotonics Center, and its associated Translational Pathology Core are in place to support Dr. [REDACTED] independent program.

As noted in this application, Dr. [REDACTED] is an excellent junior investigator with a promising career. He has great potential to improve the outcomes of pancreas cancer. His translational and basic science proposal illustrates his potential to drive our understanding of metastatic dissemination forward and launch his independent scientific career. I have a vested interest in seeing Dr. [REDACTED]'s research program blossom into a successful career, a goal that is especially imperative given the important role that surgeon-scientists have played and will continue to play in the cellular and molecular basis of pancreatic cancer invasion and metastasis.

Dr. [REDACTED] has been given seed funding by the [REDACTED] and is collaborating with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and me. He was invited to present our work at the [REDACTED] meeting in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and again an update in May [REDACTED]. He and I collaborate on research funded by an NCI PaCMEN U01 Supplement award for which he is the contact PI at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. This research is in collaboration with [REDACTED] who first described the pancreas cancer KPC mouse model. Collectively, Dr. [REDACTED] accomplishments are a result of excellent training, mentorship, and guidance as well as hard work and exemplary performance. These accomplishments also support the notion that he is poised to be a successful, productive, independent pancreas cancer surgeon-scientist.

I intend to mentor Dr. [REDACTED] for the proposed Gilead Solid Tumors Program. This mentored research experience will promote his development in pancreas cancer research by: **(1) Close scientific collaboration**: I will meet weekly with him and collaborators to discuss progress and address any barriers that arise. I will provide advice and technical expertise in the experimental design and interpretation of results to ensure the successful completion of the project. **(2) Hands on training**: By performing the experiments proposed, Dr. [REDACTED] will receive advanced hands-on training in working with mouse models of PDAC and clonal PDAC cell lines as well as IVI, IVITA, and multiplex IF. **(3) Career development**: I will guide Dr. [REDACTED] in securing independent funding, presenting his findings at national meetings, and publishing high-impact manuscripts. Moreover, I will aid Dr. [REDACTED] in networking with thought leaders in the field to foster new collaborations and insights into his research.

Our shared goal is for Dr. [REDACTED], following completion of the Gilead Solid Tumors Program project, to receive NIH R01 or equivalent funding in PDAC metastasis research which will further support an independent laboratory and research program that generates innovations in the field that positively impact patient lives. I am committed to this endeavor. In light of my previous accomplishments and my current support, I am well poised to mentor and facilitate [REDACTED] in achieving these ambitious career goals.

Sincerely,

