HAKBI Black Lung Research Proposal

HARPER ADDAM KHANE INC. (HAKBI)

THREE-STATE EMERGENCY BLACK LUNG DISEASE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

An Accelerated Six-Month Research Competition to Investigate Innovative Treatments for Pneumoconiosis, Silicosis, and Progressive Massive Fibrosis

November 12, 2026

TO:

The Honorable Patrick Morrisey
Governor of West Virginia

The Honorable Abigail Spanberger
Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Andy Beshear
Governor of Kentucky

FROM:
Charles E. Campbell-Allen
Founder & Chief Executive Officer
Harper Addam Khane Inc. (HAKBI)

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Research Funding, University Partnerships, and a Three-State Initiative to Combat Black Lung Disease

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Harper Addam Khane Inc. (HAKBI) respectfully submits this proposal requesting immediate collaboration and emergency research funding from the governors of West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky to address the devastating resurgence of coal workers' pneumoconiosis, commonly known as Black Lung Disease.

This initiative follows the November 10, 2026, PBS FRONTLINE documentary, *Coal's Human Cost*, which revealed the continuing suffering of coal miners and their families throughout Appalachia.

The documentary reported that approximately one in three veteran underground coal miners tested in Central Appalachia now have black lung disease, a rate not seen since the late 1970s.

Black lung disease and its severe manifestations, including progressive massive fibrosis (PMF), can cause permanent lung damage, respiratory disability, and premature death.

HAKBI believes this medical crisis deserves an urgent, coordinated scientific response that brings together state governments, universities, medical institutions, private foundations, and the communities directly affected.

HAKBI proposes establishing three competing, independently managed research teams—one in each participating state—with an initial six-month research and development objective.

The primary research challenge will be to investigate scientifically credible approaches that could reduce retained silica-related lung injury, interrupt inflammatory and fibrotic processes, and improve clinical outcomes for miners suffering from occupational lung disease.

A central scientific question is whether inhaled silica particles can be safely cleared, neutralized, or otherwise prevented from causing continued injury. This is an investigational objective, not an established medical capability.

The three-state initiative will combine scientific competition with cooperation, public accountability, and the shared humanitarian goal of developing effective treatments.

2. THE PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

Coal miners have powered American industries, supported national energy production, and provided economic stability for countless Appalachian communities.

Yet many of these workers now suffer from debilitating and potentially fatal occupational lung diseases.

Black lung disease develops after inhalation of hazardous mine dust, which can contain coal dust, respirable crystalline silica, and other mineral particles.

In some patients, the disease progresses into massive lung scarring known as progressive massive fibrosis.

Individuals affected by PMF may experience severe shortness of breath, persistent coughing, declining physical capabilities, increasing dependence on oxygen, and respiratory failure.

The November 2026 FRONTLINE investigation underscores the urgent need to address both existing disease and continued occupational exposure.

HAKBI proposes treating this crisis as a regional public health research priority requiring extraordinary coordination, accelerated funding decisions, and measurable scientific progress.

The immediate responsibility is to pursue better treatments while simultaneously strengthening access to existing care and preventing additional hazardous dust exposure.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

HAKBI proposes five primary scientific objectives.

Objective One: Investigate Silica Particle Clearance

Study whether biologically safe methods could enhance the removal, containment, or clearance of retained silica-containing particles from the lungs.

The research must evaluate potential injury caused by attempted particle removal and distinguish removable material from particles embedded within scarred tissue.

Objective Two: Reduce Progressive Lung Fibrosis

Investigate therapeutic strategies that interrupt or slow the inflammatory and fibrotic responses associated with silica exposure and progressive massive fibrosis.

Objective Three: Evaluate Existing and Emerging Treatment Candidates

Review existing medical treatments, investigational antifibrotic approaches, immune-modulating therapies, and other clinically plausible interventions for possible application to occupational lung disease.

Objective Four: Develop Diagnostic and Treatment Monitoring Methods

Assess imaging, lung-function measurements, blood-based biomarkers, and other methods to determine whether investigational interventions produce meaningful biological or clinical improvements.

Objective Five: Establish a Pathway to Human Clinical Trials

Develop scientifically supported treatment candidates and prepare the necessary clinical protocols, safety evaluations, regulatory submissions, and institutional approvals.

Clinical trials will proceed only after adequate supporting evidence and all required regulatory and ethical approvals have been obtained.

4. THE THREE-STATE COMPETITIVE RESEARCH MODEL

HAKBI proposes establishing a university-based research team in each participating state.

Potential academic partners for consideration include:

West Virginia Research Team

West Virginia University and affiliated academic medical and research institutions.

Virginia Research Team

Virginia Tech, the University of Virginia, and other qualified medical research institutions.

Kentucky Research Team

The University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville, and other qualified research institutions.

These institutions are proposed candidates. Their participation would require formal invitations, agreements, and confirmation of appropriate scientific capabilities.

Each state would organize a multidisciplinary research team that could include pulmonologists, occupational medicine specialists, biomedical engineers, toxicologists, molecular biologists,

pharmacologists, material scientists, medical researchers, graduate students, and advanced undergraduate students.

Each team would receive an approved research budget and operate under a common set of research objectives.

Independent scientific reviewers would evaluate the teams' results using predefined criteria that emphasize patient safety, scientific validity, innovation, reproducibility, and potential clinical benefit.

The competition would encourage rapid innovation while requiring cooperation on safety findings, research standards, and clinically significant discoveries.

5. SIX-MONTH EMERGENCY RESEARCH SCHEDULE

Month One: Organization and Scientific Assessment

Establish the three-state coordinating committee; select participating universities; appoint research directors; recruit scientific teams; review existing medical evidence; establish research objectives and safety protocols.

Scientific Discovery

Develop competing scientific hypotheses, evaluate potential therapeutic mechanisms, select appropriate laboratory models, and identify initial treatment candidates.

Laboratory Investigation

Conduct approved laboratory and preclinical investigations to assess candidate feasibility, biological activity, potential toxicity, and effects on silica-associated inflammatory or fibrotic processes.

Month Two: Independent Validation

Repeat and compare promising findings, identify scientific limitations, assess reproducibility, and determine whether further preclinical development is justified.

Translational Development

Advance the most promising candidates into additional safety evaluation, pharmaceutical or device feasibility assessment, clinical protocol design, and preliminary regulatory planning.

Month Three: Final Scientific Competition and Recommendations

Evaluate research outcomes through independent peer review; identify the strongest candidates; release a comprehensive scientific report; and determine which projects merit additional funding and further preclinical studies or regulated human clinical research.

Month Four: Performance Goal: Produce at least one independently evaluated, scientifically credible treatment-development candidate or a documented research conclusion identifying the most promising future directions.

The scientific process selects candidates with advanced Progressive Massive Fibrosis (PMF) for Clinical trial initiation within 4 to 6 months.

6. PROPOSED EMERGENCY RESEARCH FUNDING

HAKBI proposes an initial illustrative funding target of **$10 million**, funded by West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Founations and Individual donations.

Proposed Allocation	Amount
West Virginia Research Team	$2,000,000
Virginia Research Team	$2,000,000
Kentucky Research Team	$2,000,000
Shared Specialized Laboratory Resources	1,000,000
Independent Scientific and Safety Oversight	$450,000
Research Data, Patient Engagement, and Clinical Planning	1,000,000
Research Competition and Innovation Awards	1,000,000
HAKBI Administrative Fees	550,000
Total Proposed Funding	**10,000,000**

The proposal assumes support from each state.

Potential sources include state research appropriations, qualified emergency funding mechanisms, federal research programs, philanthropic foundations, private donors, and corporate partners.

All funding expenditures would be documented and subject to financial reporting and independent review.

Competition awards of $1,000,000 to the winning teams members would recognize verified scientific achievements and would never depend on exposing research participants to unnecessary risks or accelerating clinical trials without proper approvals.

7. REQUEST FOR GOVERNORS' PARTICIPATION

HAKBI respectfully requests the following commitments from the governors of West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky:

1. Convene an emergency three-state meeting within 15 days to discuss the research initiative.
2. Designate representatives from each state's health, higher education, research, and economic development agencies.
3. Identify lawful state funding mechanisms and possible public-private research partnership opportunities.
4. Encourage qualified universities and healthcare institutions to submit proposals for participation.

5. Support coordination with federal public health and medical research agencies.
6. Facilitate outreach to private foundations and philanthropic organizations.
7. Support the formation of an independent scientific advisory board with representation from affected coal-mining communities.
8. Explore opportunities to accelerate administrative and funding decisions without waiving clinical safety, research ethics, or federal regulatory requirements.

The goal is to establish a regional research partnership in which all three states share a common mission while encouraging rapid innovation research through independently evaluated scientific competition.

8. PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERS

Governors will need to approach foundations, philanthropic organizations, research institutions, and corporate contributors interested in occupational health, pulmonary disease, medical innovation, and Appalachian communities.

Potential research partners and funding sources to approach or evaluate include:

- National Institutes of Health, including the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
- American Lung Association
- Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
- Foundation for the National Institutes of Health
- Patient-centered research organizations
- Appalachian-focused philanthropic institutions
- Coal industry stakeholders and related trade organizations

These organizations will be asked for financial support.

HAKBI would request expedited consideration of this proposal.

9. MEDICAL ETHICS, CLINICAL SAFETY, AND SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNTABILITY

The safety of participating coal miners must remain the highest priority.

All laboratory investigations involving biological materials, patient information, or human participants must satisfy applicable institutional, scientific, privacy, and regulatory standards.

Human clinical trials involving investigational treatments may proceed only following the necessary Institutional Review Board approvals, and patient informed consent.

Participating individuals must receive clear information about research risks, uncertainties, expected benefits, and their right to withdraw.

No investigational treatment will be described as a cure without scientifically sufficient evidence.

Independent clinical and scientific experts will monitor the initiative to ensure that the urgency of the crisis does not compromise medical standards.

10. PUBLIC BENEFITS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The proposed initiative could provide meaningful benefits to West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and coal-mining families throughout America.

Potential benefits include identifying promising therapeutic mechanisms, expanding research expertise, developing new collaborations among universities, supporting specialized employment opportunities, attracting additional research investments, and increasing national attention to occupational lung disease.

The initiative could also strengthen relationships between researchers, healthcare providers, and affected mining communities.

Its most important long-term objective is to contribute to treatments that reduce suffering, preserve lung function, improve quality of life, and potentially slow or prevent further deterioration among miners diagnosed with pneumoconiosis.

11. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC REPORTING

HAKBI proposes an online transparent reporting structure that includes weekly scientific progress summaries, monthly financial disclosures, and a publicly available three and six month results report.

Participating universities would retain appropriate scientific independence.

Research agreements would establish policies concerning intellectual property, publications, data protection, competing financial interests, and public access to discoveries developed through public funding.

West Virigina, Virgina amd Kentucky will retain public interest in discoveries developed through this research proposal.

12. CONCLUSION: A CALL FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Governors Morrisey, Spanberger, and Beshear:

For generations, coal miners in West Virginia, Virginia, and Kentucky have risked their lives underground to provide the energy that helped build the American economy.

Today, many of those same men and women face a progressive, disabling, and potentially fatal disease.

Their suffering demands more than sympathy.

It demands scientific investment, governmental leadership, medical innovation, and urgent cooperation.

Harper Addam Khane Inc. proposes bringing together three states, three competitive research teams, and a six month accelerated scientific investigation to pursue breakthroughs in the treatment of black lung disease.

We recognize that discoveries cannot be guaranteed and that medical safety cannot be sacrificed for speed.

Nevertheless, we believe the severity of this crisis justifies immediate action to mobilize the nation’s scientific resources.

HAKBI respectfully requests an initial meeting with the three governors or their designated representatives within 15 days to begin developing this emergency research partnership.

Take this opportunity to assess this proposal, identify potential university collaborators, and establish a responsible pathway toward public and private financial support.

The coal miners who helped power America deserve a sustained national commitment to protecting their health and improving their futures.

Respectfully submitted,

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PUBLIC RESEARCH DONATIONS

Individuals interested in supporting HAKBI’s proposed Black Lung Disease Research Initiative may contact the organization or use the following designated payment information:

Cash App: $WaigMe
PayPal: daboukay@gmail.com

PROPOSAL STATUS: Submitted for consideration.