



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BOARD APPROVES MEDICAL CENTER AFFILIATION AGREEMENT

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents unanimously approved a research and education affiliation agreement between the University of Kansas (KU) and Saint Luke's Hospital of Kansas City designed to expand training opportunities for medical residents at KU, enhance the region's life science research infrastructure, and bolster KU's efforts to become a nationally-recognized comprehensive cancer center.

After a presentation by KU Chancellor Robert Hemenway and KU Medical Center Executive Vice Chancellor Barbara Atkinson, and after a lengthy public debate by Board members, the Board unanimously adopted the following statement:

“The Kansas Board of Regents approves the proposed affiliation agreement between the University of Kansas and Saint Luke's Hospital and we urge the University to continue its work to successfully consummate the critically important affiliation agreement with the KU Hospital Authority.”

“We do a lot of important things on this Board and if I look at the past or even in the future, I can't believe that there is anything that would have a greater impact on the quality of life of every Kansas family, and I think that if you don't believe that, if you don't believe how important this issue is, you probably haven't experienced the frustrations, the fear, and the expense of fighting cancer,” added Regent Christine Downey-Schmidt, Chair of the Board of Regents. “I am very pleased to be a part of advancing this effort and I hope that we can get on with the business of discovering cures, providing treatments, and training doctors. The medical research and education goals and objectives that can be furthered and attained through our support of this agreement will have a positive impact on the quality of life of every Kansas family.”

The Board received important assurances from KU that this agreement will create opportunities that will benefit all Kansans by expanding training for future physicians and specialists in public and private hospital settings, increasing the ability to research, design and deliver cures and treatments, and building on existing partnerships with hospitals across Kansas. The Board is convinced that this agreement will not have the effect of exporting Kansas taxpayer dollars or Kansas doctors across the state line as some critics have erroneously contended.

This agreement also represents a crucial step in KU's important quest to obtain Comprehensive Cancer Center designation from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). This

designation would provide Kansans throughout the state with increased access to advanced cancer care and opportunities to participate in cutting-edge clinical trials that otherwise would not be available. In order to receive the most advanced treatments available, Kansans are currently forced to travel great distances from their homes and families to places like the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota or MD Anderson in Texas.

“This agreement benefits Kansas in many ways,” concluded Regent Downey-Schmidt. “First and foremost, it brings us closer to bringing National Cancer Institute care to Kansas, giving our citizens access to the cutting-edge treatments that aren’t currently available in the region. We simply must do more to advance health in Kansas and this is a critical step. It also expands our state’s ability to train more doctors. Kansas is facing a substantial shortage of health professionals, and this agreement goes a long way in tackling that problem.”

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