KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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BOARD RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Higher Education Funding would be cut by $120 million

(TOPEKA) – Today Regent Donna Shank of Liberal, Chair of the Kansas Board of Regents, issued the following statement in response to Governor Kathleen Sebelius's Fiscal Year 2009 and Fiscal Year 2010 budget recommendations:

"The Board certainly understands the harsh reality of the state's economic environment and the realistic and overall context in which the Governor's budget recommendations should be viewed. Due to careful planning undertaken over the past few months, the state's higher education system is prepared to absorb Fiscal Year 2009 budget reductions. However, it will not be easy or painless; these reductions will have a serious impact, and there will be consequences as a result. Nonetheless, we understand that every state governmental entity must share in the pain so we are prepared to do our part."

"Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2010, the Governor has proposed further budgetary reductions that will make it increasingly difficult to address critical workforce shortages that exist in Kansas, make additional progress on vital deferred maintenance projects, and keep higher education affordable for hard-working students and their families. The state's higher education system only recently recovered from cuts incurred during the last recession and a $120 million hit would profoundly stunt the progress the system has made toward meeting the state's workforce and economic development needs."

"The Governor noted in her speech last night that 'our universities are one of our State's greatest assets. By educating young Kansans they promote generational change and contribute to the knowledge economy that will move Kansas forward.' I couldn't agree more. Higher education institutions are engines of economic growth. Increased workforce skills boost overall economic productivity, thus the surest way to grow the Kansas economy is through an investment in higher education."

Specifics:

For the state's public higher education system (7 public universities, 19 community colleges, and 6 technical colleges):

- A 3% budget cut in the FY 2009 operating budget equates to a reduction of $24.3 million.

- A 7% (3% in FY 2009 and 4% in FY 2010) budget cut in the FY 2010 operating budget equates to a reduction of $56.3 million.

- In addition, the Governor recommended a total of $20.1 million in program and capital expenditure reductions which include the elimination of:

  - ✓ $1.3 million for deferred maintenance projects on state university campuses.

  - ✓ $2.5 million for Wichita Aviation Infrastructure funding.

  - ✓ $2.5 million for Graduate Medical Education programs in Wichita.

  - ✓ $1.008 million for the Kansas Academy of Mathematics & Science.

- Overall, higher education funding would be reduced by a net total of $120.3 million ($24.94 million in FY 2009 and $95.34 million in FY 2010).

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About the Kansas Board of Regents:

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six universities and the statewide coordinating board for the state's 32 public higher education institutions (six state universities, a municipal university, nineteen community colleges, and six technical colleges). In addition, the Board administers the state's student financial aid, adult education, GED, and career and technical education programs. The Board also authorizes private proprietary schools and out-of-state institutions to operate in Kansas, and administers the Kan-ed network, a statewide network that provides broadband Internet access and distance learning capabilities for schools, hospitals, and libraries.

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