



# KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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## **BOARD OF REGENTS RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS**

(TOPEKA) – Today Regent Christine Downey-Schmidt, Chair of the Kansas Board of Regents, issued the following statement in response to Governor Kathleen Sebelius' Fiscal Year 2009 budget recommendations:

“The Board is certainly pleased that Governor Sebelius has proposed a budget that recognizes higher education as a critically important priority. In what many would describe as a lean or constrained budget year, the Governor has recommended meaningful investments in higher education that are absolutely essential for enhancing this state's future.

In order to properly serve Kansas, our state's 36 public higher education institutions require the resources necessary to provide effective workforce training opportunities for Kansans, to recruit and retain talented faculty, to address critical workforce shortages in the state, and to ensure access to higher education, through student financial assistance programs, for all Kansans. The Governor's budget recommendations, which include critical institutional operating grant increases and substantial student financial assistance enhancements, certainly move us in a positive direction. Further, with proposals to expand the state's school of pharmacy, increase scholarship dollars for students who commit to serve as critically-important math and science teachers, and invest in the establishment of the Kansas Academy of Mathematics and Sciences, the Governor's budget proposal also provides resources that will better enable the Board of Regents and its institutions to respond to important state needs.

In addition, the Board applauds the Governor for honoring her commitment to protecting the state's higher education infrastructure by recommending funding for vital state university building maintenance projects. While the comprehensive deferred maintenance funding plan, which was approved by the Legislature and signed into law by the Governor last year, provided a much-needed down-payment, this funding enhancement will allow the campuses to tackle additional critically-important projects.

My fellow Regents and I are committed to ensuring that the state's public higher education system meets the challenges of today and tomorrow, and our system's ultimate success relies upon important funding decisions that the Governor and the Legislature will make in the coming months. Because Kansans, now and more than ever before, will require higher education to succeed, we must remember that an investment in higher education is an investment in the future of Kansas.”

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