

TRIBUTE TO UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HOSPITAL PRESIDENT/CEO IRENE CUMMING

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the outgoing president/chief executive officer of the University of Kansas Hospital, Irene Cumming, who is leaving KU's hospital after 11 years to become chief executive officer of the Oak Brook, Illinois, based University HealthSystem Consortium, a group of 97 academic medical centers and their affiliated hospitals.

During her tenure as president/CEO of the University of Kansas Hospital, Irene Cumming compiled what the Kansas Legislature recently described as a "stunning list of successes and achievements." As Lawrence Journal-World editor Dolph Simons, Jr., recently noted, "Cumming became CEO of the hospital in 1996 after serving as its chief financial officer since 1994. The hospital was in bad shape in terms of the number and excellence of its doctors, staff and patients. Staff morale was very low, and its perceived excellence in the minds of greater Kansas City residents was suffering. Today, it is the best hospital in Kansas City. Its patient load is growing each year, it enjoys a solid financial base and it provides great support for the KU medical school both in the quality of training it provides to residents and in the dollars it provides to the school. Cumming helped to build a true winner and model for other hospitals, particularly those with close historical ties to a medical school."

The improvements and accomplishments credited to the University of Kansas Hospital under Irene Cumming's leadership are numerous, including:

Since 1998, patient volume has grown by 50 percent to nearly 20,000 patients, shattering all existing patient volume records in the 100 year history of the hospital;

Financial health has improved steadily every year, with revenue climbing 185 percent to more than half a billion dollars since the Hospital Authority was established;

Financial strength has allowed significant capital investment in resources and facilities, totaling nearly \$450 million in the 8 years following the establishment of the Hospital Authority;

This financial strength has also permitted a 340 percent increase in support provided for the hospital for the university since 1998, with \$31 million this year alone;

After purchasing the outpatient cancer program from a for-profit corporation to which the university had transferred it in the 1990s, the hospital has invested \$75 million in cancer services, including the construction of the largest outpatient cancer center in the region, opening this summer on the hospital's Westwood campus;

In 2000, the heart program at the hospital was revitalized, culminating in the 2006 opening of the \$77 million Center for Advanced Heart Care;

The hospital became, and continues to be, the region's only nationally-accredited level 1 Trauma Center;

The hospital's Bennett Burn Center is the only adult/pediatric burn center in Kansas City

accredited by the American College of Surgeons and the American Burn Association;

The quality and safety of patient care has improved dramatically and gained national recognition; in 2006, the hospital ranked 11th among the Nation's 81 academic medical centers in overall safety and quality rankings;

The hospital ranks in the top 17 percent of institutions in the University HealthSystem Consortium database in mortality;

The hospital earned Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center of the American Nurses Association, the first designation for a Kansas-based hospital [only 3.5 percent of the Nation's health care organizations are Magnet hospitals];

The hospital received the first Annual Performance Achievement Award from the American Heart Association for stroke care in a six-state region;

The hospital's cancer program received the 2004 Commission on Cancer Outstanding Achievement Award, achieved by only eight percent of cancer programs in the country;

The hospital is a nationally recognized leader in the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's 100,000 lives campaign;

The hospital pioneered the creation of partnerships between physicians and hospital staff to raise quality, with a model so successful it has been adopted by many institutions across the country;

Patient satisfaction ratings have climbed more than 900 percent since 1998 in the Kansas City area;

Employee turnover has dropped from 33 percent in 1998 to 11.69 percent, the lowest among Kansas City hospitals;

Sixty-one percent of the hospital's nurses have BSN degrees, compared to a 33 percent national average, and the hospital has the second lowest nursing turnover rate among large hospitals in Kansas City;

The hospital's staffed beds have nearly doubled, from 275 to 508; and

The hospital has achieved all of this while still providing care for those who can't afford it; fiscal year 2007 projections are to absorb nearly \$100 million in uncompensated care charges.

Prior to joining KU Hospital, Irene Cumming was associate director of medical affairs for St. Luke's Health System and chief executive officer of St. Luke's Medical Development Corporation in Kansas City, Missouri. From 1989–1993, she was executive vice president and chief financial officer of Allegheny Health, Education and Research Foundation of Philadelphia. Additionally, she previously was a partner in the national health care division of Price Waterhouse, where she was one of the first women to be admitted to the partnership.

Clearly, Irene Cumming is a woman of vision, distinction and achievement. The University of Kansas Hospital was very fortunate to have her as its president/CEO for the past 11 years and her departure leaves an exceptional pair of shoes to fill. Madam Speaker, on behalf of all residents of the Kansas City region and all consumers of KU Hospital, I thank Irene Cumming for her many accomplishments while associated with the University of Kansas Hospital and wish her every success in future endeavors, as well.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF LUKE MCCOY FROM "PENSACOLA SPEAKS"

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise today to recognize a living legend in northwest Florida. After nearly 15 years, Mr. Luke McCoy is stepping down as the host of the long-running "Pensacola Speaks" talk radio show in my district.

Luke's viewpoints were as well-known as his distinctive voice as he took to the airwaves in the afternoon. However, he let all callers and guests offer their own opinions and insights and never hesitated to broach a tough political issue. The topics covered both national and local levels, and the callers always numerous and well-informed no matter the issue. Luke was well-known as the "Common Man's Intellectual" as he brought these issues into a forum where all felt comfortable discussing them and offering their views.

It was not just the topics brought up on Luke McCoy's show that made it great, but also the way Luke presented them—sometimes with humor, sometimes with a touch of irreverence, and when appropriate with well-deserved dignity. However, his respect for differing viewpoints was always constant, and northwest Florida will miss having his familiar presence on the airwaves in the afternoons. Fortunately, listeners will still get to hear Luke on the local morning show, and I know his unique personality will be a breath of fresh air.

Luke McCoy is more than a radio personality, though, Madam Speaker. More than anything, he is a patriot, having served his country in combat and being wounded in action in Vietnam. He served with both the Army's 82nd Airborne Division as well as the Marine Corps as he recognized the greatness of this Nation and answered a call to duty. Those that listen to Luke and meet him know this patriotism is still strong today. He recognizes the different opinions and people that have come together to make America what it is today, but his support goes to what he sees as keeping this the greatest Nation in the world.

Madam Speaker, I know many share my sadness with Luke's departure from "Pensacola Speaks." His name is a fixture in the community, and I know many will seek his advice for years to come. His passion to contribute to this country is endless, and I know as he rides his Harley through northwest Florida and elsewhere that he will always maintain his support and love for the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO TRACY DELLA VECCHIA

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, as our men and women in uniform are deployed all over the world, they leave behind parents, siblings, spouses, children, and friends. It has