



**Testimony from
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House Health & Human Services Committee
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Good afternoon Chairman Crum and members of the committee. I am Doug Girod, Executive Vice Chancellor of the University of Kansas Medical Center. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on SB 199 this afternoon.

The University of Kansas Medical Center has four missions: education, research, patient care and outreach. This year, we have enrollment of 3,362 students in our schools of medicine (2,016), nursing (728), health professions (575) and other interdisciplinary and graduate programs. With campuses in Kansas City, Wichita and Salina – along with service and activities in every county in the state of Kansas – we take to heart our unique and important role in making KU Work for Kansas.

Research is central to what we do at the KU Medical Center. When Governor Brownback unveiled his Roadmap for Kansas, a key component was to elevate our medical center's national stature. A major step forward in that direction was the achievement in 2012 of National Cancer Institute designation.

In addition to our focus on NCI designation, we have worked closely with policymakers, national experts and community stakeholders to develop a comprehensive plan that is underway to transform our achievements – achievements that will provide more health professionals for our state, access to better care for our citizens and research that can lead to cures for many. Thank you, state legislators, for your support in that effort.

The proposal developed by Senator Pilcher-Cook and others to establish The Midwest Stem Cell Therapy Center at the University of Kansas Medical Center certainly is to be commended. Thank you for your interest in the science of this and other therapies and commitment in supporting the work of our very talented researchers and scientists.

While we did not initiate the legislation, you should know that we currently have research with adult stem cells. Dr. Buddhadeb Dawn, who appeared before this committee earlier this month, is engaged in very promising research involving adult stem cells that have the potential to repair the heart after a heart attack. Dr. Dawn's research is at the cutting edge nationally, and we recruited him to KU Medical Center with a significant investment for research that would provide insights into repair of diseased hearts, the number-one killer of people in the United States (with cancer a close second). His cardiovascular research has attracted and continues to attract investments from the National Institutes of Health and we are proud of his scientific achievements.

Adult stem cell treatments have been used for many years to successfully treat leukemia and related bone/blood cancers utilizing bone marrow transplants. The scientific community is now focusing on additional therapeutic options including organ repair such as what was described by Dr. Dawn. Other applications could well be possible – the science of which has not yet been discovered.

While the bill before you today does not contain funding for the proposed center, the operations of the center include developing a structure that disseminates the knowledge of adult stem cells and associated technology for the state and region. The estimated cost is \$1.2 million for the first year, \$754,500 for the second year, with a total of \$10.7 million over 10 years. These are not funds we currently have for this program at the medical center and, as such, funding through the appropriations process of the state or development work in the private sector would be needed to implement the initiative and meet the objective of SB 199.

In closing, let me again commend the committee chair and others who are working to help the University of Kansas Medical Center meet its mission. I'd be happy to answer any questions.