

Statement from Governor Mark Dayton

As Mr. Stromberg notes, there is no single organizational model that has been established for all medical schools and their attendant hospitals. Nor does there appear to be any correlation between a certain model and excellence in the medical school, as judged by its national rankings.

Thus, it seems to be incumbent upon Minnesota to devise its own unique system, taking the existing inter-relationships, updating them to reflect current realities, and then positioning them to improve the University's quality of education, patient care, and national standing.

What does seem to be consistent across all models is the sufficiency of funds to achieve and sustain their excellence. Undergirding that sufficiency must be the commitment of the principals to make those investments in capital improvements and operational proficiencies in state-of-the-art facilities and advanced medical practices.

The University's Medical School and the Fairview System presently lack that financial sufficiency, and those problems threaten to get even worse and cause even greater deficiencies in the years ahead. Fairview has been experiencing serious operating losses in recent years and has said it can no longer afford to continue its current level of financial support for the Medical School. It has also, reportedly, failed to make the capital investments necessary to provide adequate hospital facilities for patients, doctors, and hospital staffs.

It seems clear that major changes must be made immediately to correct those deficiencies, before, as I said earlier, they worsen and cause even greater damage to the Medical School's and its hospitals' quality and standing. Look at what Mayo Clinic has just announced: a \$5 billion investment to keep its world-premier status.

That is the scale of what the Medical School, Fairview, and the State of Minnesota must commit to and carry out over the next decade. Otherwise, the quality of medical training provided to over 70 percent of Minnesota's physicians will suffer irreparably.

This cannot be allowed to happen.

I believe that the future advancement of the Medical School depends, first and foremost, on adequacy of funding. Mayo's \$5 billion investment sets a marker for what is necessary to establish and maintain premier status. The State of Minnesota needs to set up a similar capital improvement fund, using a dedicated revenue stream to secure bonds that can rejuvenate the U's existing hospitals and then build a new one.

Then the Governor and the Legislature must be asked to provide the additional operating funds for the Medical School to make up for Fairview's withdrawal of financial support.

Those advances will be expensive; however, the cost of failing to make them would be far greater. For Minnesota to lose its medical pre-eminence would be catastrophic.