



MEDIA RELEASE

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KHA President and CEO Announces Retirement

Tom Bell expresses gratitude for members and the opportunity to serve them

(January 2, 2020) – Tom Bell, president and CEO of the Kansas Hospital Association, will retire in September 2020.

Bell began his career at KHA in 1986 as vice president and legal counsel after working as a health care attorney for the Topeka firm of Goodell, Stratton, Edmonds and Palmer. He also served as senior vice president/legal counsel and executive vice president before he became president and CEO of the Kansas Hospital Association in January 2005.

Bell has led the association through many milestones, including the 100th anniversary of the association in 2010. Under his leadership, KHA increased its focus on quality and patient safety in numerous areas, including the founding of the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative with the Kansas Medical Society and the development of one of the strongest Hospital Engagement Networks in the country. Bell stressed the importance of advocacy on behalf of Kansas hospitals, especially in areas of maintaining the state's strong tort laws, holding managed care companies accountable, reversing proposed Medicaid cuts, and most recently in moving Kansas closer to adoption of Medicaid expansion. The association also increased collaborative efforts with stakeholders throughout the state as the health care system changed to focus more on preventive and population health. Under Bell's leadership, KHA is recognized as a national leader in the development of new models of health care delivery and advocacy efforts that support the evolving rural health care system.

"I am most grateful for the work that our members do 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to serve their communities. People who work in the health care system care for our most vulnerable citizens at their most vulnerable times and we should express our gratitude to them every single day. I also am incredibly appreciative of the extraordinary staff of top-notch people who work at the Kansas Hospital Association," said Tom Bell, president and CEO, Kansas Hospital Association.

Bell is a native Kansan from Holton and graduated from Kansas State University and Washburn University School of Law. After graduation from law school, Bell clerked for Kansas Supreme Court Justice Harold Herd prior to joining Goodell Stratton. He earned his certified association executive designation from the American Society of Association Executives and has been a member of the American Health Lawyers Association, the Kansas Association of Hospital Attorneys and the Kansas Society of Association Executives, where he served as president in 1996.

In his role as president and CEO of KHA, Bell is the president of the Kansas Health Services Corporation and APS; and chairman of the Board of the Health Alliance of Mid-America, a joint venture between the Kansas Hospital Association and the Missouri Hospital Association. He also serves on the boards of the Kansas Health Education and Research Foundation, the Kansas Hospital Association Workers Compensation Fund, the Kansas Healthcare Collaborative, KaMMCO, the Kansas Health Information Network, and the Regional Policy Board of the American Hospital Association. Most recently, he has served as a member of the Governor's Council on Medicaid Expansion.

Beyond his state leadership role, Tom also serves in a number of capacities in regional and national health care related initiatives. He works closely and frequently with top management of the American Hospital Association and represents perspectives unique to Kansas at various national health care conferences.

“Not only is Tom esteemed in Kansas but he has the admiration of health care leaders across the nation. Kansans have been fortunate to have Tom's guidance and expertise. There is not a health care advocate that is more respected,” said Melissa Atkins, administrator and CEO of Graham County Hospital and 2020 KHA Board Chair.

The KHA Board of Directors has developed a succession planning process to best serve the organization and its members. An announcement regarding Bell's successor will occur in early 2020.

The Kansas Hospital Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization existing to be the leading advocate and resource for members. KHA membership includes 219 member facilities, of which 123 are full-service, community hospitals. Founded in 1910, KHA's vision is Optimal Health for Kansas.

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