



NEWS RELEASE
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**Governor Perry Visits
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
El Paso School of Medicine for Ceremonial Signing**

EL PASO - Gov. Rick Perry arrived on the El Paso Campus of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at noon today to attend a ceremonial signing for higher education legislation and to celebrate the passage of the bill that will provide \$48 million in startup funds for the full four-year El Paso School of Medicine. With a flourish, the signing of the bill sealed the deal that would enable the El Paso School of Medicine to hire the necessary faculty and proceed with the accreditation process to seat the first four-year medical school class in 2009.

In a statement issued by Texas Tech University System Chancellor Kent Hance, he said, "Today a dream comes true. Today the perseverance, commitment and hard work of a community is realized. Today the future of healthcare changes dramatically. Today Governor Rick Perry signs legislation approved by the 80th Texas Legislature to fund the final components necessary for the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso School of Medicine to become a fully operational four-year medical school.

"Today, the future of El Paso's healthcare, economy, and influence in the area of border and international healthcare research changes dramatically," he added. "Countless individuals worked diligently to ensure that this medical school has the most extraordinary curriculum, the most competent administration and state-of-the-art facilities of its kind."

Chancellor Hance added, "At the opening convocation of the new Texas Technological College in 1925, President Paul Horn stated, "Everything that is done on these West Texas plains ought to be on a big scale. It is a country that lends itself to bigness. ... Let our thoughts be big thoughts and broad thoughts. Let our thinking be in world-wide terms. Today we continue to think in world-wide terms."

Chancellor Hance concluded, "The Texas Tech University System is proud to become home to the first four-year medical school on the United States-Mexico border. The impact this will have on the future health of border residents here and beyond is immeasurable and everlasting."

The El Paso School of Medicine has already received the green light from the Liaison Committee of Medical Education for a site visit in November.

The event was attended by hundreds, amid a party atmosphere of many congratulatory remarks, mariachis, food and celebration.

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center officials began the process of seeking funding for the school in 1999, and anticipated a 10-year timeline. The Governor's appearance at today's event will ensure that the 10-year projection is met.