



# News Release

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## **Regents Salute President Abbott Upon Retirement Announcement**

PIERRE, S.D. – As James W. Abbott completes his final year as president of the University of South Dakota, the South Dakota Board of Regents said he will be remembered as a strong and dynamic leader who prepared the university well for its mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

Abbott announced Wednesday at a State of the University address that he would step down from the presidency and retire in June of 2018. He is USD's 17<sup>th</sup> president, the only alumnus to serve as its president, and the second longest-serving president in the university's history. Abbott was appointed USD president by the Board of Regents in July 1997.

“For nearly 21 years, Jim Abbott has led the university to new levels of excellence, presiding over enrollment growth and a nearly three-fold increase in scholarships and financial awards,” said Regents President Bob Sutton. “He has guided two successful fund-raising campaigns that helped to grow the USD Foundation endowment from \$45 million to \$258 million during his time as president.

“The Board of Regents thanks Jim for his extraordinary service to our state. We wish him the very best,” Sutton said.

Mike Rush, the regents' executive director and CEO, added, “President Abbott has been an exemplary leader for his university. As the longest-serving president on our Council of Presidents and Superintendents, his perspectives are greatly valued within our system of public higher education. His leadership will be deeply missed.”

Sutton said the Board of Regents will announce soon a presidential search process and timeline for securing Abbott's successor.