

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Life Sciences Institute

Action Requested: Approval of a New Institute

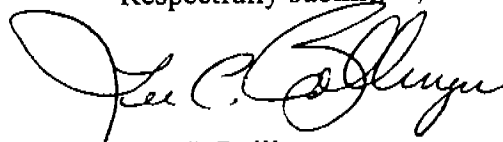
Background:

In May 1998, the Life Sciences Commission was established to perform two tasks: to assess candidly the University's strengths and weaknesses in the life sciences, both in research and in the education of our students; and to make recommendations to me on how the University can become one of the leading academic centers for the study and application of the life sciences. Huda Akil, Gardner C. Quarton Professor of Neurosciences and co-director of the Mental Health Research Institute, and William Roush, Warner-Lambert/Parke-Davis Professor of Chemistry, served as co-chairs of this important study. In February 1999, the Commission published its findings and recommendations to the University community in a report entitled "Challenges and Opportunities in Understanding the Complexity of Living Systems." At the April 1999 Regents' Meeting, members of the commission presented their findings and recommendations to the Board. Their recommendations recognize Michigan's unique opportunities to contribute to new knowledge and technical discovery in the areas of genomics, structural biology, cognitive neuroscience, and biocomplexity. The Commission remarked that "it will be impossible to move into a position of leadership without a significant immediate and long-term commitment to the life sciences at our institution."

To signify that commitment, I propose that the Regents endorse the Life Sciences Initiative and establish a new Life Sciences Institute, in accordance with Regents Bylaw 6.03 on institutes and centers. The institute shall be a distinct academic unit with reporting and governance structures that ensure academic excellence and academic integration with the University community. It shall engage in a variety of functions, in both research and education, all designed to place the University at the forefront of this important field. While the Commission recommended that each initiative be established as a separate institute, it is my belief that the University will be best served by one integrated organization through which each of the initiatives can be developed and supported.

It is recommended that the Board of Regents endorse the Life Sciences Initiative; approve the establishment of this institute, and empower me as president to take such initial steps as are necessary to establish an institute, including but not limited to securing funds, searching for a director, and developing an appropriate organizational structure for the institute. A specific amendment to the Regents' Bylaws regarding the institute shall be proposed at a later time.

Respectfully submitted,



Lee C. Bollinger
President

May 1999

APPROVED BY THE REGENTS ON

MAY 21 1999