

OPINION

STATE-TIMES/MORNING ADVOCATE

READERS' VIEWS

Praise for LSU/OLOL partnership

Blueprint Louisiana congratulates LSU and Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center (OLOL) for pursuing and negotiating a truly historic agreement that will fundamentally change for the better health-care delivery and graduate medical education in Louisiana.

For the indigent and uninsured in the Baton Rouge region, this new model offers modern health-care facilities and improved access to a comprehensive range of care — from preventive and primary care services to surgical specialties.

For our graduate medical students, this new model offers a more diverse mix of patients and a broadened clinical faculty that will yield a richer educational experience.

For our state government, this new model offers the opportunity to improve health outcomes and lower costs. As an added benefit, the LSU/OLOL public-private partnership will provide a Level 1 trauma center — a state-of-the-art lifesaver to serve the region.

There's clearly a lot in this agreement to like. Special thanks go to Dr. Fred Cerise, LSU system vice president for health affairs and medical education, and Scott Wester, OLOL's chief

executive officer, for their commitment and determination. Gov. Bobby Jindal and Department of Health and Hospitals Secretary Alan Levine also provided support for the vision of a new health-care model that serves us better and costs us less.

Blueprint Louisiana, a citizen-driven effort to identify and implement essential changes to fundamentally improve Louisiana, is guided by a handful of simple, but powerful principles. Two principles are worth mentioning here:

- Establish excellence as a target. Big problems require bold and daring solutions. Small steps are not enough. We can be the best.

- Recognize government as part of the solution. Our elected leaders are our partners. They need our support to make the hard decisions that real progress requires.

The LSU/OLOL partnership is a bold reach for excellence in health-care delivery and graduate medical education. We believe it deserves the support of the Legislature and the public.

**DAN O'LEARY, member
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