Dear Campus Community:

I am pleased to announce that the University of Michigan Board of Regents authorized our campus to purchase a portion of the FirstMerit Bank complex in downtown Flint. We have been negotiating to purchase the north tower because we understand there is a critical need for space.

The purchase of the 10-story building will allow us an opportunity to expand more quickly and at a fraction of the cost of constructing a new building. The addition of the north tower expands campus by 11%, with an additional 160,000 square feet of space, and provides the university with much needed academic and administrative space. The negotiated purchase price is $6 million. It would cost approximately $64 million for similar new construction.

It is important to me that we move quickly to alleviate our space constraints. We have not yet determined what programs and offices will be housed within the north tower, but will begin the process of evaluating space priorities on campus. This building will represent the first addition of academic space to campus since 2002, when the William S. White Building opened.

The FirstMerit north tower is ideally situated for our expansion. It sits just across Saginaw Street from the University Pavilion and is next to the Riverfront Center.

The purchase is contingent upon the successful completion of due diligence, but is expected to close by March 31, 2016.

The FirstMerit complex includes two other buildings, which the bank will continue to occupy with no reduction in its workforce. This purchase allows them to streamline business and it puts better use to a building that has not been fully utilized for more than a decade.
It was great to see the Regents show such deep support for this campus, particularly during their annual meeting in Flint. I look forward to continuing to grow together.

Go Blue!

Susan E. Borrego, Ph.D.
Chancellor