

Gilbert Re-Elected SIU System Board Chair

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EDWARDSVILLE - Following his re-election as Chairman of the Southern Illinois University System Board of Trustees, J. Phil Gilbert released the following statement:

"It is humbling to have been re-elected to chair the SIU System Board of Trustees and I look forward to working with my colleagues on the board to continue moving our system forward in 2020. I want to acknowledge the board's decision to select Dr. Ed Hightower to continue to serve as Vice Chairman. We have worked closely over the past year and I look forward to his leadership and counsel during this term. I believe we are stronger and more unified.

"With the selection of Dr. Dan Mahony as our new president and a successful search underway for a new Carbondale Chancellor who will collaborate with the leadership of Chancellor Pembroke in Edwardsville, I believe we have laid the foundation for a

successful period in our university system's life. But there are challenges ahead and only through the strength of our commitment to each other, will we truly move forward as a unified system. One successful year does not fully turn the tide of the difficulty the SIU System and higher education in Illinois has experienced. We still deeply feel the impact of the budget impasse, but thanks to the bipartisan leadership of our governor and state lawmakers, we see light at the end of the tunnel. I cannot express enough the appreciation this board and I feel toward Governor Pritzker and our SIU System legislative delegation from Springfield, Edwardsville and Carbondale who are fighting for this university system every single day. As we look forward to the coming year, we will welcome a new president and chancellor into our family.

"We will build off the last twelve months of successful efforts to recruit and retain more students. We will concentrate efforts to make the university more efficient and solidify our mission to provide health care delivery to central and southern Illinois. And we will continue our work to strengthen our fiscal condition and that includes carrying on the work we started this year to rebalance the allocation of dollars within the system. Not all of these goals can be accomplished overnight, but that should not lessen our resolve to accomplish them as quickly as possible. Lastly, I want to thank our SIU System family for the support they have given this board. We are working every day to make the university better for our students, faculty, staff and the broader communities that support an SIU System campus. With your help, we will make 2020 a great year for the SIU System."

The SIU system Board elects officers for a term of one year. Gilbert's chairmanship will last until February 2021.

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