



# NEWS RELEASE

Following is a news release from the office of Senator Christopher "Kit" Bond

## Bond Announces Funds for Texas County Memorial Hospital

### Senator Commends Innovative E-Care System that Improves Rural Health Care

HOUSTON, MO – U.S. Senator Kit Bond today joined state, county and community leaders, representatives of Texas County Memorial Hospital and the U.S. Department of Agricultural (USDA) Rural Development to announce more than \$400,000 in federal funds for the Texas County Memorial Hospital.

"It is important that we invest in our infrastructure that supports our ability to provide for our families and meet the needs of the community," said Bond. "Today's announcement highlights how important it is to enhance the quality of rural health care available to all Missourians. Rural residents deserve care that rivals that available in the cities."

Bond was instrumental in helping Texas County Memorial Hospital (TCMH) receive the \$86,500 in new grant money and more than \$350,000 in loans through the USDA

Rural Development Distance Learning and Telemedicine Program. The funds will enable the hospital to purchase the second phase in a state-of-the-art system called E-Care.

E-Care delivers electronic medical records to all of TCMH's clinics. E-Care is a multi-faceted electronic medical (EMR) implementation program that was developed in 2006. E-Care allows authorized healthcare professionals to easily access electronic medical records, review the profile of a patient and make a diagnosis in a confident manner. E-Care will save patients time and money by increasing the number of residents receiving recommended health screenings and enhancing the safety and quality of health care.

Bond pointed out that providing health care in a rural setting is different. In rural communities there are different issues and challenges -- people are more spread, there are fewer practitioners than in urban areas, and it takes rural folks longer to access care. Bond noted that given the limited resources that are available for small rural hospitals it would be very difficult to afford medical technology like E-Care without the funding assistance announced today. Bond emphasized that this project and others like it provide another way to help close the healthcare gap and will hopefully help entice more doctors to practice in rural Missouri.



Pictured left to right: Darren Lingle, Jo Ann Emerson's Rolla Office; Janie Dunning, acting RD State Director; Senator Kit Bond; Wes Murray, CEO Texas County Memorial Hospital; Jay Gentry, TCMH Healthcare Foundation Director

"This kind of assistance mirrors USDA Rural Development's mission and President Bush's initiative of being committed to the future of rural communities," said Anita J. Dunning, Acting State Director for USDA Rural Development. "Appreciation is extended to our federal elected officials for supporting USDA Rural Development. They have been strong proponents for the necessary funding for essential services for rural Missourians."

"It's a huge honor for Texas County Memorial Hospital to be a recipient of this telemedicine loan and grant, especially in light of the fact we are one of only seven hospitals in the nation to receive funding in this cycle," said Wes Murray, chief executive officer at TCMH. "For a rural area where technological advances seem to arrive slowly, this funding will vault us way ahead of the average rural American hospital."

TCMH is a 66-bed, general acute care institution that provides medical assistance in emergency care, general surgery, obstetrics, laboratory, radiology, cardiopulmonary and physical therapy. The medical staff specializes in family practice, obstetrics, internal medicine, and general surgery. TCMH has clinics located throughout Texas County in Licking, Houston, Summersville and Cabool covering a 40-mile service area including portions of Dent, Phelps, Shannon, Douglas, Wright, Laclede and Pulaski counties.