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Brackbill, Robert

From: Carol Howard [choward@benderconsult.com]
Sent: Monday, March 12, 2012 12:08 PM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Subject: Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) Affiliation Support Letter
Attachments: Brackbill Letter 31212.dot

Dear Mr. Brackbill,

At the request of Ms. Joyce Bender, I am sending you her comments in support of the Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) affiliation.

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
Carol Howard

Carol M Howard
Office Manager
Bender Consulting Services, Inc.
3 Penn Center West, Suite 223
Pittsburgh, PA 15276
412-787-8567

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Recruiting and hiring people with disabilities for competitive career opportunities

March 12, 2012

Robert Brackbill
Chief, Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) Affiliation

Dear Mr. Brackbill,

I am delighted to submit comments to you in support of the Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) affiliation. I am the founder and CEO of Bender Consulting Services, a company that focuses on aligning talented individuals living with disabilities with career opportunities in professional positions. As a small business owner, focused on creating jobs, and ensuring people with disabilities have access to freedom, through competitive employment, I am concerned about the negative impact that rising health care costs have on the community. As an employer, I believe providing excellent health care benefits to my employees is important. Currently, I provide family benefits and pay 100 percent of the health insurance premium for my employees. The Highmark/WPAHS affiliation will allow for provider competition in western Pennsylvania, which is required to ensure costs are brought under control, for my company and other small and large businesses.

Highmark has been a model employer and a recognized national leader in the area of including talented professionals with disabilities within their workforce. This affiliation would benefit western Pennsylvanian's with disabilities, as the affiliated concern would be able to further extend employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

I urge you and your team to expedite the decision to approve the affiliation between Highmark and WPAHS. Please contact me if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Joyce A. Bender

JAB/cmh