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Corporate & Financial Regulation

MAR 18 2012

Pennsylvania
Insurance Department

March 8, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Brackbill:

I support the proposed affiliation of Highmark and West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) as I am very concerned about the status of future health care in Western Pennsylvania.

I believe we must preserve WPAHS to maintain provider choices for consumers and assure competition among viable health care delivery systems.

Citizens in Western Pennsylvania have benefitted from choice. If there is no choice of providers for consumers and a lack of competition among providers:

- a. Physicians will have little to no choice of where or how they practice medicine and potentially leave the region to practice elsewhere; and
- b. Costs will rise, with damaging results
 - a. Employers will struggle to continue to provide benefits.
 - b. Ultimately, patients will go without needed care.

The Highmark/WPAHS affiliation will benefit the local economy; protect the jobs of those working within WPAHS and the local businesses that supply goods and services to the system.

I request the prompt approval of Highmark's affiliation with WPAHS.

Sincerely,


Mitch Swain

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