

May 1, 2017

Joseph DiMemmo, CPA
Deputy Insurance Commissioner
Office of Corporate & Financial Regulation
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

VIA EMAIL: ra-in-comment@pa.gov

RE: Modification to Order No. ID-RC-13-06

Dear Deputy Commissioner DiMemmo:

I have a strong belief that health care monopolies are detrimental to patients and that is why I am writing in support of the proposed modification to Order No. ID-RC-13-06. The proposed modification would help to foster a more level playing field for real health care competition in western Pennsylvania which would benefit and protect consumers.

I have long railed against monopolistic behaviors by health care providers, and I believe that competition in the health care marketplace will yield benefits for consumers. I testified in support of Highmark Health and AHN's investment in Western Pennsylvania before Insurance Commissioner Teresa Miller in May of 2015. At that time, I spoke about how the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) decimated access for residents of the Mon Valley, including Braddock Borough (where I serve as Mayor) by closing UPMC Braddock only to then began construction on a new hospital in a more affluent neighborhood in Allegheny County.

Recognizing the difficulties faced by Mon Valley residents as a result of UPMC's actions to restrict access to health care, Highmark Health and AHN invested in Braddock Borough by opening an urgent care center that meets the needs of the community. This project is indicative of Highmark Health and AHN's wise strategy to invest in projects that make sense by providing for increased access to health providers. I sincerely believe that Highmark Health has a sound, comprehensive strategic plan for AHN through 2020 that will help them to thrive as a market leading Integrated Delivery and Financing System after the Consent Decree with UPMC ends.

A financially successful and stronger AHN will allow Highmark to further limit the growth of premium costs for Highmark members and reduce overall health care costs for all customers while maintaining convenient access to high quality providers and resources across western Pennsylvania, which will significantly benefit my constituents and protect us from falling victim to health systems that embark on monopolistic pursuits.

I respectfully urge you to favorably consider the requested modification.

Sincerely,

John Fetterman
Mayor, Borough of Braddock