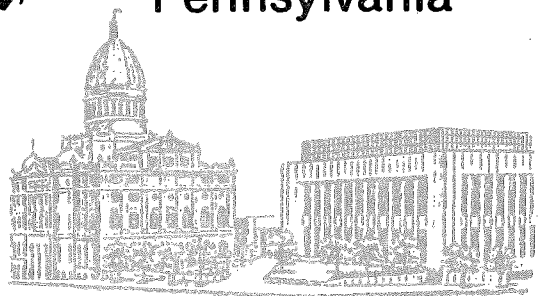


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Westmoreland County Pennsylvania



Ted Kopas
County Commissioner

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February 22, 2012

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Corporate & Financial Regulation
FEB 24 2012
Pennsylvania
Insurance Department

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

Dear Chief Brackbill:

Please accept this letter of support for the transactional filing submitted to your office regarding Highmark's proposed affiliation with West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS).

While I am certainly not "choosing sides" in the ongoing dispute between Highmark and UPMC, I am interested in the impact of the Highmark/WPAHS affiliation on the residents of Westmoreland County. Our residents rely heavily upon WPAHS for both their healthcare and their jobs.

The Highmark/WPAHS affiliation will greatly benefit the local economy, protecting the livelihood of thousands of Western Pennsylvanians in Westmoreland County who work within WPAHS especially the close neighboring hospitals - Forbes Regional and Allegheny Valley. Additionally, with this affiliation our residents will continue to have the choice they deserve among healthcare providers. Competition is critical to improving quality, expanding access and containing healthcare costs.

If the Highmark/WPAHS affiliation does not occur, it is likely our region will lose WPAHS as a valuable community asset. Westmoreland County residents who are WPAHS employees and patients should have certainty about the future of important community assets.

In this age of skyrocketing healthcare costs, I am hopeful that through the affiliation with WPAHS, Highmark's vision to build a new system will transform the market into one that reduces costs, improves quality and creates a better member experience. If costs rise, the whole

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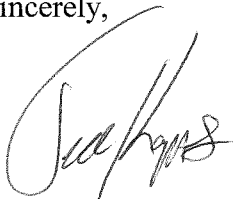
Robert Brackbill
Chief, Company Licensing Division
February 22, 2012
Page 2

community suffers. Westmoreland County government shares the same struggle as our businesses; we increasingly find it a challenge to provide healthcare benefits for our employees at affordable prices.

I support the Highmark/WPAHS affiliation, as I am confident that this move will improve healthcare for my constituents and throughout western Pennsylvania.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Kopas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "T" and "K".

Ted Kopas
County Commissioner