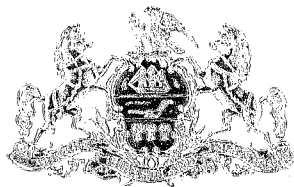


AB0171

DOM COSTA, MEMBER
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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES:
GAMING OVERSIGHT
INSURANCE, VICE CHAIR
JUDICIARY
TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DEMOCRATIC SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ON
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DELEGATION
DEMOCRATIC DEPUTY WHIP

February 28, 2012

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Corporate & Financial Regulation

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Pennsylvania
Insurance Department

Robert Brackbill
Chief, Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120
FAX(717)787-8557
rbrackbill@pa.gov

Dear Mr. Brackbill,

As the elected Member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from the 21st District, I have the privilege of representing several communities that rely on The Western Pennsylvania Hospital, a member of the West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS). West Penn has provided excellent quality care through dedicated physicians, nurses and staff for more than 100 years. In this capacity, I am writing to register my support for the proposed WPAHS-Highmark Inc. affiliation, which is pending approval by the Insurance Department.

Recent history has been challenging for West Penn as WPAHS has struggled financially. Two years ago the downsizing or elimination of services, including the Emergency Department, was a difficult chapter for the residents of Pittsburgh's East End neighborhoods. Today, we are relieved to know that a renovated, state-of-the-art Emergency Department is available 24/7 to provide the same personalized care that is the hallmark of West Penn Hospital. The Women and Infant's Center is expanding and the physical transformation of the hospital will continue in the months ahead.

Highmark has provided critical support to enable the restoration of clinical services at West Penn. Dr. Melani and his leadership team has devoted untold hours and considerable financial resources to insure that the individuals and employers of western Pennsylvania have choices in where they receive healthcare. In addition, the proposed Highmark-WPAHS affiliation will provide security to the nearly 12,000 employees of WPAHS, including those who have devoted their working lives to West Penn.

West Penn and its sister hospitals are recognized locally, statewide and in the nation as high quality providers of advanced healthcare. Highmark is recognized across the country and in our community as a high quality company dedicated to health and wellness. The proposed partnership will have tremendous benefits for the City of Pittsburgh and beyond.

I am confident that you will conduct a thorough examination of the proposed transaction and **I urge you to approve the affiliation quickly.**

Sincerely,

Dom Costa
State Representative
21st Legislative District

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