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Brackbill, Robert

From: Scott Jones [sjones@circlec.net]
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2012 3:09 PM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Subject: Concerning the proposed Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System affiliation
Attachments: Highmark WPAHS letter.doc

Mr. Brackbill,

Attached is my letter of support for the proposed affiliation of Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield with the West Penn Allegheny Health System.

Thank you,

Scott Jones

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March 20, 2012

Mr. Robert Blackbill
Chief, Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

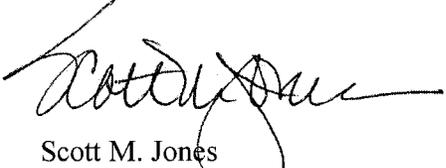
Dear Mr. Blackbill,

I am writing in support of Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield's proposed affiliation with the West Penn Allegheny Health System. I believe that West Penn Hospital and Allegheny General Hospital are great community assets that have served this community well. Their presence not only offers our community excellent choices for medical care, but this system also provides healthy competition that undoubtedly helps to prevent even greater cost increases for medical care in our region.

I am strongly of the opinion that a monopoly is unhealthy in any business, and especially so in health care. If UPMC were to become the only hospital system in the region, I believe that prices for care would certainly rise, health care choices available to Pittsburgh area residents would be diminished, health care jobs in the region would be lost, and that the impact would be a negative one for the entire region.

I am in favor of Highmark's efforts to preserve WPAHS, and would urge the state to move quickly to allow the process to move forward. As WPAHS is known to have serious financial problems already, it is all the more important that approval be granted as soon as possible to keep the West Penn Allegheny Health System viable, and to retain a strongly competitive provider market in western Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,



Scott M. Jones
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Pittsburgh, PA 15241
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