

Brackbill, Robert

From: Brackbill, Robert
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 3:43 PM
To: 'Chronister, Ronald'
Subject: UPE/Highmark Form A Filing: Public Comment Received from Harris Ferris

Mr. Chronister,

The following public comment concerning the subject filing is being forwarded to you for appropriate response.

Robert E. Brackbill, Jr. | PIR | Chief, Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
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From: HNFerris@aol.com [<mailto:HNFerris@aol.com>]
Sent: Friday, March 23, 2012 11:48 AM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Subject: Public Comment Highmark/WAPHS

March 23, 2012

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

Dear Mr. Brackbill,

I am writing to urge the prompt approval of the proposed Highmark / West Penn Allegheny Health System affiliation by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department.

It is vital that the West Penn Allegheny Health System be preserved as a safeguard to both quality and costs competition. The alternative, a single provider, would diminish both patient and physician choices. Costs will rise and quality will potentially weaken.

West Penn Allegheny Systems employs 11,000 people. These vital and productive jobs, with direct benefit to hundreds of thousands of patients, must not be allowed to be lost.

Pennsylvania can proclaim high quality health care in part due to the presence of WPAHS. As one of the nation's top-performing health care systems based on quality, safety and patient satisfaction, Allegheny General Hospital holds the State's highest one year survival rate for adult patients undergoing heart transplants. The adult liver transplant program has the state's best one- year survival rate and is among the top 25 such programs in the US.

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In the future, the alignments between health care providers and insurance payees will foster physician led approaches, innovative reimbursement models and greater transparency while controlling costs and improving quality. It is the vision of The Highmark/ WPAHS affiliation to lead our region as the nation trends toward such "Integrated Delivery Systems".

I am speaking out with concern as both an employer and a resident of Western Pennsylvania. Please act quickly to approve the Highmark/ WPAHS affiliation.

Sincerely,

Harris N. Ferris
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