

0448

Bybee, Cressinda

From: Chronister, Ronald [ronald.chronister@bipc.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 9:47 AM
To: Bybee, Cressinda
Cc: wdhm19@comcast.net
Subject: Response to Public Comment from William Hawes
Attachments: ScannedFile.pdf

Ms. Bybee: I am attaching a response from UPE to the comment received by the Insurance Department from William Hawes. I am also copying Mr. Hawes with the response by email.

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**BEFORE THE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Statement Regarding the Acquisition of Control of or Merger with
Domestic Insurers:

Highmark Inc.; First Priority Life Insurance Company, Inc.;
Gateway Health Plan, Inc.; Highmark Casualty Insurance Company;
Highmark Senior Resources Inc.; HM Casualty Insurance Company;
HM Health Insurance Company, d/b/a Highmark Health Insurance Company;
HM Life Insurance Company; HMO of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Inc.,
d/b/a First Priority Health; Inter-County Health Plan, Inc.;
Inter-County Hospitalization Plan, Inc.; Keystone Health Plan West, Inc.;
United Concordia Companies, Inc.; United Concordia Dental Plans of Pennsylvania, Inc.;
United Concordia Life and Health Insurance Company

By UPE, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation

**Response of UPE to
Comment of William D. Hawes Dated March 21, 2012**

UPE is responding to the comment from William D. Hawes dated March 21, 2012. The comment is numbered as Document 0266 on the Highmark/ West Penn Cumulative Log page of the Pennsylvania Insurance Department website.

Mr. Hawes has raised some questions regarding the proposed affiliation of Highmark Inc. ("Highmark") and West Penn Allegheny Health System ("WPAHS"). Specifically, Mr. Hawes asks how communities can be united to have access to affordable, quality health care. Mr. Hawes also asks about the role of physicians in general and specialty care.

The proposed affiliation seeks to revitalize WPAHS and ultimately increase patient choice, not limit it, giving patients access to a greater number of quality health care providers. UPE believes that this transaction is critical to ensuring the continued vitality of the WPAHS and maintaining provider choice in our Western Pennsylvania communities. The ultimate plan is to build a new integrated health system that will deliver value, choice, and high-quality health care services to the Western Pennsylvania community. Providing choice for both patients and physicians will ultimately benefit the entire region by providing additional patient access to general and specialty care.

UPE would like to thank Mr. Hawes for his comments.

UPE
120 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

DATE: April 19, 2012

cc: William D. Hawes