

1411

Brackbill, Robert

From: Wyatt504@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 12:07 PM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Subject: (no subject)

Dear Mr. Brackbill: I am currently the chair of the Allegheny County Schools Health Insurance Consortium. As such, I am one of twenty-four trustees who represent nearly eighteen thousand contracts that cover over forty-thousand individuals. We provide the benefits for all school districts in Allegheny County save North Allegheny School District and the Board of Education for Pittsburgh. We also include Ellwood City School District as well as the Community Colleges of Allegheny and Beaver County.

It is because I am involved with providing my colleagues the best health care at the lowest cost, I am compelled to write regarding the current situation of Highmark and West Penn Allegheny. As I said when I testified for the commission previously, preserving West Penn Allegheny is very necessary if we are to have any competitive health care in the region. It is also very necessary if we are to have any choice in health care. Should the area lose access to the West Penn Allegheny Health System, there would no doubt be soaring health care costs since the region would have no alternative than to utilize the single high-priced provider, thus stuck with a monopolistic situation, good for the entity, but bad for the consumer and for school district taxpayers.

As consumers must continue to have the ability to access affordable health care, they must have the ability to access some of the region's best doctors. This can be accomplished only if West Penn Allegheny is maintained. The professional atmosphere promulgated by Highmark would enable to help West Penn Allegheny survive and thrive, allowing choice of doctor and choice of treatment.

While not as noble a sentiment as the above, another reason for the partnering of Highmark and West Penn Allegheny is quite simplistic. Thousands of jobs in and around the communities currently served by West Penn Allegheny would be protected. Should this happen, the local economy would not see the gigantic hit it would take should West Penn Allegheny be allowed to fragment or disappear only to be replaced by a monopolistic entity.

Finally, as a trustee of our Consortium, I was able to read the position paper "A Competitive and Affordable Healthcare Marketplace For Western Pennsylvania" which discusses the West Penn Allegheny Health System as an important part of Highmark's anticipated new integrated delivery system. This IND will allow for greater choice and provide well-coordinated care at a more affordable cost to Western Pennsylvania consumers. Having such choice is extremely important to my fellow Consortium members.

Thank you.

David Wyatt, trustee
ACSHIC
5435 Claybourne #504
H 412-683-3787/C 412-303-3225

05