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Brackbill, Robert

From: Donald Green [dgreen@casp.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2012 2:00 PM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Subject: Highmark - WPAHS Pittsburgh Hearing
Attachments: Highmark-WPAHS 4-4-12.pdf

Dear Mr. Brackbill,

Attached is my testimony for teh Hearing to be held on April 17 at the Westin Convention Center in Pittsburgh. I have registered to testify in person.

Pax, Salaam, Shalom,

Pr. Don Green

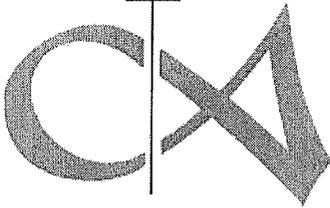
Executive Director

Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

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Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania

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Rev. Dr. Donald B. Green, Executive Director

April 4, 2012

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

RE: Highmark/West Penn Allegheny Health System

Dear Mr. Brackbill:

I am writing as an individual to encourage your department to quickly act to approve the affiliation of Highmark and the West Penn Allegheny Health System into an integrated delivery system for our region. In order to maintain consumer choice and competitive fees to the consumer and those who pay for their health care coverage, it is vital to preserve the West Penn Allegheny Health System.

Having served as the Assistant to the Lutheran Bishop in southwestern PA for a decade, I know the challenges that have been faced by congregations and mid-level religious judicatories as they deal with Pittsburgh having some of the highest insurance premiums in the nation. "Can we sustain a full time pastor?" is the question congregations wrestle with when faced with exorbitant insurance premiums. A choice of medical providers will insure that costs for medical services remain competitive, and will not be dominated by the monopoly of a single dominant provider, such as UPMC.

I listen to the 26 bishops and church executives whom I serve at Christian Associates lament the cost of health coverage for their clergy and lay professionals. They wrestle with the implications of the recession and unemployment in the region upon their faithful. The affiliation of Highmark and West Penn Allegheny Health System will create and sustain high quality jobs in our region; a needed boost to our regional economy. Those same Christian leaders wrestle with securing appropriate coverage for their professional and lay leaders; some have already seen the negative consequences of exorbitant fees for "out of network" care as the current impasse between Highmark and UPMC continues.

Again, I urge the PA Insurance Commission to act quickly to affirm this new partnership to preserve consumer choice, reduce insurance costs, and provide needed jobs in southwestern Pennsylvania. Thank you for your attention to this plea for quick action so that the resources of Highmark and WPAHS can be utilized to create a symbiotic relationship for the greater good of all residents of southwestern Pennsylvania.

Pax, Salaam, Shalom,
Rev. Dr. Donald B. Green

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for the Mission of the Gospel,
and the Wholeness of the Communities.*

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