

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter in support of allowing more close collaboration between Highmark and Allegheny Health Network. I have worked at Allegheny General Hospital for the past 12 years through some difficult times. Through many of those years, necessary reinvestments were often deferred due to the financial status of the former West Penn Allegheny Health System. Since the merger, I have seen significant improvements at our hospital that are a result of the capital investments made by Highmark. Over the past few years, I have witnessed improved services at the hospital, increased patient volume, and better ability to deliver care to our patients. This has all been demonstrated by Highmark's strong financial performance and AHN's significant improvements from the past.

Highmark is demonstrating a major commitment to western Pennsylvania. Allowing them to make major capital investments will allow AHN to provide more and better service to the patients of our regions. To provide optimal care, we need a level playing field in order to grow. Allegheny Health Network provides care to key areas of Western PA, including underserved areas of Pittsburgh such as the east end and north side. We offer vital access to care for some of the people who can least afford it. Furthermore, AHN contributes to the future of medicine in Western PA by serving as a teaching hospital for the health care practitioners of the future. We need the financial ability to continue our work and to improve patient access to areas outside of the city. As western PA ages, our services will become even more vital. Failure to support Highmark and AHN may ultimately lead to less choice, less competition, and ultimately a health care monopoly in our region. A single health care provider would ultimately result in less competition, less access, and higher costs to the citizens of our region.

In addition to being community assets for patients of Western PA, Highmark and AHN are also major employers within the Pittsburgh region. I ask you on behalf of my coworkers - many who are mothers and fathers with dreams for their children- to support our ability to hold jobs at home in Western PA.

We ask for your support of Highmark and AHN. Doing so will help to grow important community assets and support the communities of Western PA.

Thank you,

David Pavlik, Pharm.D.
Allegheny General Hospital