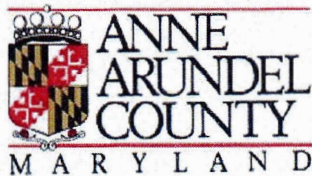


# EXHIBIT 17(b)



Department of Health  
J. Howard Beard Health Services Building  
3 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
Phone: 410-222-7375 Fax: 410-222-4436  
Maryland Relay (TTY): 1-800-735-2258  
www.aahealth.org

**Jinlene Chan, M.D., M.P.H.**  
**Health Officer**

March 16, 2015

Kevin R. McDonald, Chief  
Certificate of Need  
Maryland Health Care Commission  
4160 Patterson Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21215-2299

**Subject: Letter of Support- Anne Arundel Medical Center's Certificate of Need  
Application for Cardiac Surgery Services**

Dear Mr. McDonald:

As Health Officer for Anne Arundel County, I appreciate the opportunity to offer my support for Anne Arundel Medical Center's (AAMC) Certificate of Need application to establish a cardiac surgery program. The Health Department works closely with AAMC to address many countywide health issues affecting our citizens, but certainly none is more critical than managing heart disease and assuring rapid access to cardiac services. AAMC has a longstanding interest and commitment to establish a cardiac surgery program to complement its existing high quality heart and vascular services, and to meet the needs of the community.

Anne Arundel County is the largest county in Maryland (pop. 550,000+) without cardiac surgery. In 2013, approximately 500 residents left Anne Arundel County for heart surgery. In addition, an estimated 200 patients were transferred from AAMC to other hospitals for heart surgery. County residents should have improved access to all their heart care. This is not only stressful for the patient, but also for family members who must travel back and forth to a hospital outside the area to be with their loved one.

AAMC has a strong track record of advancing high quality clinical programs including its cardiac care, joint replacement and cancer care, as well as being a leader in women's and newborn services. Patients, families and organizations consistently give AAMC high marks for quality, patient satisfaction and innovation. AAMC's patient-and family-centered care model, which aims at engaging patients and families as partners in healthcare delivery, serves as a national model of excellence.

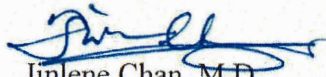
The Department of Health has long partnered with AAMC to address the health needs of our community. They have provided strong leadership for the Healthy Anne Arundel Coalition and

have been active in the work towards addressing the county's health priorities of obesity prevention and chronic disease management. In addition, they have partnered with us by providing 1) community classes for tobacco cessation, 2) leadership in the Obesity Prevention work group, and 3) participation in the Community Health Needs Assessment, which provides the foundation for developing and implementing strategies to improve the health status of Anne Arundel County residents.

The hospital already has a highly regarded cardiac program and it seems only logical to allow AAMC to include a remaining piece of this program - cardiac surgery. Given the outstanding reputation of AAMC and its isolation from existing cardiac surgery programs, I urge the Maryland Health Care Commission to approve AAMC's application to provide this critical service in the community.

Thank you for your consideration in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jinlene Chan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jinlene Chan, M.D.  
Health Officer, Anne Arundel County