



City of Havre de Grace, Maryland

711 Pennington Ave.

Havre de Grace, MD 21078

410-939-1800

Mr. Steffen,

In reviewing the public documents available on the MHCC website this evening, I saw that a revised final order for the UM UCH application to close UM HMH and open a FMF has been posted. In reading that document there is an extra condition that was added which prevents the closure of UM HMH until the FMF and psychiatric hospital in Aberdeen have been completed and licenses for use have been issued. We always understood that HMH could not be closed unless and until the entire UM UCH proposal is complete and fully operational. This is nothing new.

Mr. Steffen, you have missed my point that I thought I clearly articulated in my most recent letter to you. I never thought nor suggested that UM HMH would be closed by UM UCH before the FMF and psychiatric hospital were constructed in Aberdeen and licensed to operate.

Below are my concerns; I have listed them in an attempt to be unambiguous and clear.

1. There is a global pandemic that our County, State, Nation, and World are currently in the throes of.
 - a. This pandemic has highlighted that the current healthcare delivery model in our country and State is vulnerable and incapable of handling a surge.
 - b. After every major disaster, calamity, or terrorist attack best practice is to review the entirety of the event and to create and implement change. This process gathers vital information which better prepares us to handle similar events in the future.
 - i. These after-action assessments are completed at local, State, and Federal levels which include hand-picked commissions who are staffed with the best and brightest people our country has to offer.
 1. These commissions always recommend critical changes which must be made in order to better prepare for the future.
2. The certificate of need process in the State of Maryland creates permanency to the healthcare delivery models which are approved by the MHCC.

. It is nearly impossible to change, halt, or redesign a project after it has received approval from the MHCC.
3. If the MHCC moves forward with reviewing and then subsequently approves the UM UCH applications at the meeting tomorrow, and when critical changes to the healthcare delivery model in our country and our State are recommended by the commissions who will study this pandemic, we will be unable to change the healthcare delivery model in Harford County.

. At that future time when lessons have been learned from this pandemic regarding the optimal healthcare delivery model which serves the best interests of the citizens of Maryland, we in Harford County will be stuck with the model approved by the MHCC at tomorrow's meeting.

. At that time, we will be unable to implement the healthcare delivery model which will better prepare our Country, State, County, and Citizens to handle future healthcare crises.

4. The State of Maryland is in a dire financial position due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

. The MHCC themselves questioned the wisdom of UM UCH financing all their projects with hundreds of millions of dollars of debt before there was a financial crisis.

. The MHCC expressed concerns that financing this much debt may not be in the best interest of the citizens of Maryland.

1. This concern was voiced by the MHCC in November of 2019 when the State of Maryland was in a sound financial position

a. If there was concern from the MHCC regarding the wisdom of UM UCH taking on this much debt and the negative effects it could have on the citizens of Maryland during a time when the State had a solid financial footing, It is illogical to move forward with voting on UM UCH's multiple projects that will create hundreds of millions of dollars of debt at a time where the future financial stability of the State of Maryland is such a precarious position.

In closing, my concern is not that UM HMH will be closed before the new FMF and psychiatric hospital is built and open in Aberdeen. My concern is that if the UM UCH applications are left on the agenda for tomorrow's meeting, voted on, and passed, Harford County will be unable to change the healthcare delivery model in the future to take advantage of the best practices which will emerge after this pandemic has been thoroughly studied.

A person with your background in healthcare analytics and quality improvement processes knows that after a major event such as this COVID-19 pandemic, there will for certain be new and different guidance that helps us make better decisions going forward. At that time in the future, when best practices are clearly known, the MHCC should review the UM UCH applications to determine if they make sense considering the new optimal healthcare delivery structure. This is our only opportunity to pause and give our future-selves the benefit of hindsight by being able to look back on this pandemic, study it, and truly understand the financial impacts and necessary changes to make to our healthcare delivery model in Harford County to better prepare us for the future.

So, Mr. Steffen, in keeping with the mission statement of the Maryland Health Care Commission, I ask you again, please remove all three UM UCH applications from the agenda for tomorrow's (04/16/2020) MHCC meeting.

Respectfully,

William T. Martin

Mayor