

April 16, 2020

Mr. Ben Steffen, Executive Director
Maryland Health Care Commission
4160 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Dear Mr. Steffen,

As President of the Medical Staff at UM Upper Chesapeake Health, I am responsible for representing the voice of our passionate and dedicated medical staff members. I am honored to represent such an amazing group of over 400+ providers who are on the front lines each and every day, not just during this COVID-19 pandemic, but each and every day, 365 days a year.

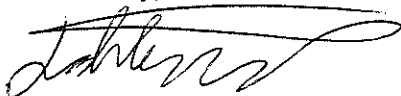
We are the providers who see, firsthand, the challenges that UM UCH Leadership and our Board face as they work tirelessly to maintain UM Harford Memorial Hospital until their project plans are approved by the MHCC.

As you know, I forwarded to you on October 30th, 2019 an electronic petition supported not only by active members of our medical staff but our aligned community medical providers as well— all 398 who were compelling you and the MHCC Commissioners to move forward as expeditiously as possible to approve UM UCH's projects. Their support and the urgency for this approval has never waned and in fact has only continued to elevate over the last several months.

While you, and perhaps the MHCC Commissioners themselves, may have received concerned letters and/or calls from select elected officials and a small number of the public, I think it is important for you to be aware, that those opinions and concerns are being dramatized for political gain and contain, as you are aware, many factual inaccuracies. The inaccuracies and misinformation are purposely shaped inappropriately during this unfortunate COVID-19 pandemic, in a manner that cannot take the MHCC off track and unfocused on the bigger picture, for the longer term, for the residents of Harford County.

The message you need to hear from me, as the representative of our medical staff, includes the following: there is 100% support from the medical staff for UM UCH's projects as presented to the MHCC, the critical need to approve these projects at the MHCC meeting taking place today, April 16th, is of paramount importance; and lastly any decision to delay the review and approval of these projects, we the medical staff believe, would have a significant negative impact on the continued care delivery within our community.

Sincerely,



Muhammad Jokhadar, MD
President, Medical Staff