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December 17, 2020

Dear Board of Directors:

I am writing regarding a matter of great importance to residents of Bradford and McKean County. I was recently informed by your CEO Jeff Zewe and COO Rick Braun that you are planning to significantly reduce health care services provided at Bradford Regional Medical Center.

The proposed changes will not only cut services provided at BRMC by drastically reducing available hospital beds and eliminating surgical services but also will have a significant economic impact on the region through the reduction of hospital employees.

I am very much aware of the challenges facing rural health care facilities across the country, and our region is not immune from those challenges. However, there seems to be a pattern associated with this continual decline in services. Quite frankly, since the formation of Upper Allegheny Health System there has been a steady decline of health care services at BRMC by shifting services to Olean General Hospital.

In fact, local officials including myself were given assurances in 2009 that services would be ENHANCED by such a merger. We were further encouraged to support the merger with Kaleida Health in 2017 as a way of enhancing health care services. Instead, all we have seen a continual reduction of health care services.

I have several questions:

1. What alternatives were considered before making this decision?
2. Mr. Zewe acknowledges that this will not solve the long-term financial situation for UAHS so what is the long-range plan? Are you planning further reduction of services or even closure of the facility?
3. The impression in the community is that UAHS receives very little support from Kaleida Health. Can you elaborate on what support is provided to the Bradford community?
4. Other hospitals and health care systems in Pennsylvania are investing in their facilities and enhancing services. Has there been any discussion or consideration of Bradford Regional Medical Center joining another health system such as UPMC or Allegheny Health Network?

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As a state legislator who has served the citizens of McKean County for over 18 years, I have always been a strong supporter of our rural health care facilities. However, I am deeply concerned about your proposal and how it will impact our community. In fact, our Commonwealth has provided significant support to BRMC over the years, including direct financial support with taxpayer dollars to construct the hospital addition that includes the surgical suites that you plan to shut down.

I urge you to reconsider this decision. Let's look at alternatives that enhance health care services in the region. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Martin T. Causer

State Representative

67th District

MTC/rlr

Cc: Mr. Jeffrey Zewe, CEO UAHS
Honorable Glenn Thompson, Congressman
Honorable Cris Dush, Senator-elect
McKean County Commissioners
Mr. James McDonald, Mayor of Bradford
Mr. Shane Oschman, OEEO, City of Bradford