PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF NEED
APPLICATION FOR THE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP OF
CHRIST HOSPITAL TO HUDSON HOSPITAL OPCO, L.L.C.

Wednesday, May 23, 2012

BEFORE:

DR. POONAM ALAIGH
WILLIAM CONROY
DEVON GRAF

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DR. ALAIGH: We're going to get started here. So everyone, please take a seat. I'm opening this public hearing. Good evening. My name is Dr. Poonam Alaigh. I'm a member of the State Health Planning Board. Joining me tonight on my right is William Conroy who is the Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Health and Senior Services.

This is a public hearing of the State Health Planning Board in relation to the transfer of ownership of Christ Hospital. The Department deemed the application complete and in accordance with the requirements of the law, the State Health Planning Board is required to hold public hearing on the application within 30 days of this action. Adequate notice of this hearing has been published in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 26:2H-15.8. Notice was sent to the Secretary of State who posted the notice in a public place. Copies of the hospital's CN application are available for review at the Jersey City Public Library, the New Jersey State Library in Trenton and the Department of Health and Senior Services.

Information gathered at this hearing will be reviewed by the State Health Planning Board. In addition to reviewing the application from Hudson, Hospital Opco, L.L.C. and the Department staff's
analysis and recommendations in a public meeting.

Although not all the members of the State Health Planning Board are present tonight, this community public hearing is being transcribed. And the transcript along with any written comments submitted tonight will be available to all Board members along with a transcript and written submissions prior to the meeting to review this application.

There will also be limited time available at the next public meeting of the State Health Planning Board to hear from members of the public. At that meeting the applicant will present the application and answer questions the Board members may have.

In the interest of making efficient use of the time for tonight's hearing, each speaker will be limited to three minutes. If you have longer written comments with you, please provide a copy to the Board and they will be added to the record. Anyone interested in speaking tonight should sign in on the speaker sheet at the entrance here in the auditorium.

Anyone who wants to submit written comments after tonight's hearing and before the Board meeting is urged to do so. Such comments must be submitted no later than Wednesday, May 30th and should
be addressed to the State Health Planning Board in care of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Certificate of Need process, the State Health Planning Board will vote on a recommendation as to the decision of this application and will be submitted to the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services. The State Health Planning Board's hearing is part of the Certificate of Need process, and your comments will be considered and as we review issues related to health planning, hospital and related health care activities and access to healthcare services. Your comments are an important part of this process and will be considered along with materials submitted by the applicant.

The Board can recommend approval of the application, approval with conditions or denial of the application before it. The Commissioner will make the final decision on the application after the Board makes its recommendation. Thank you, everyone. And we will get started.

Our first speaker is Jerramiah Healy.

Please spell your first and last name so that we can transcribe it.
MR. HEALY: Jerramiah Healy, Mayor of Jersey City. J-e-r-r-a-m-I-a-h. Healy is H-e-a-l-y.

Good evening, everyone and Commissioners. I've been asked to read this letter which I've already submitted.

It's a very short letter, so I'll read it. "Dear members of the Commission and Deputy Attorney General,
gownsman, I write in support of the transfer of ownership of Christ Hospital from Christ Hospital to Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. Transfer will not only provide financial stability to the hospital, also preserve the hospital's mission and hopefully ensure that the residents of Hudson County long served by this institution continue to receive the best possible quality health care. Thank you for your consideration. Please contact me if you have -- if you need any further information."

But I can't stop there. I have three, minutes. Right? So I have about two minutes and 10 seconds left. I just want to say that Christ Hospital has a tremendous tradition here not just in Jersey City. I would say easily from Journal Square up to the north end of Jersey City, including a good portion of our northern neighbors, Union City and North Bergen serving at least 200,000 residents between -- among those three places. Maybe 250,000 residents. And it's
urgent that healthcare continue to be provided to all of our citizens. And we were happy with the process. We’re happy with the new owners, or the perspective new owners. And we urge you to approve this transfer so that the high standard, high quality of care that Christ Hospital has delivered decade, upon decade, upon decade to our city and our two cities just to the north of us so that that can continue. And our concern is that healthcare certainly be available to all of your citizens. And we urge that you approve this transfer. Thank you very much.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Mr. Peter Kelly.

Just state your name and spell your full name, please.

MR. KELLY: Good evening. My name is Peter Kelly. That’s P-E-T-E-R K-E-L-L-Y. And I’m the present Chief Executive Officer of Christ Hospital. And I come before you tonight to advocate in the strongest possible terms the approval by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services the Certificate of Need application to transfer the operating license of Christ Hospital to the new owners, Hudson Hospital Health, Holdco, L.L.C. Christ Hospital has served the healthcare needs of the residents of Hudson County for 140 years. We’re the second largest hospital in the county providing a wide spectrum of
clinical services including 50,000 emergency room visits per year to our patients, regardless of their ability to pay. Christ Hospital is also one of the largest employers in Jersey City and Hudson County.

The past five years we have sought out an affiliation or partnership with a financially stable hospital or healthcare system in the region with a goal of such relationship being the infusion of critically needed capital dollars needed to support clinical services, infrastructure improvements, technology advances and personnel at Christ Hospital.

Unfortunately, as is the case with many financially troubled urban hospitals in New Jersey these partnerships did not develop and we found ourselves increasingly reliant on state subsidy which are dwindling rapidly. And in any event, a heavy reliance on any form of government subsidy is an unsustainable strategy with nothing short of dire financial consequences.

As a result of our failure to secure and ensure long-term financial stability Christ Hospital was forced to file for protection under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy Code on February 6, 2012. In a very transparent auction process Hudson Holdco -- Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. whose principals on Bayonne
Medical Center and Hoboken University Medical Center was awarded the right to purchase Christ Hospital by Judge Morris Stern after an open auction in his court on March 27, 2012. While the order by Judge Stern marked the end of a long and painful financial journey for Christ Hospital, it also marked the beginning of a new and exciting opportunity to provide healthcare services for the residents of Jersey City, Hudson County and the State of New Jersey. The owners of Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. have articulated a vision for a new integrated healthcare delivery system that will provide high quality care at lower cost, while at the same time providing greater access to all levels of care including preventative care, ambulatory care, inpatient care and long-term care. Such coordinated care will improve treatment outcomes on all levels to the residents of our city and our county.

Hospitals and physicians will become partners committed to a level of collaboration that will create a model of care consistent with attention to patient affection and Affordable Care Act. In the bankruptcy court Hudson Hospital Holdco leadership pledged not only to maintain but improve access to care for the underinsured and uninsured residents of the region. Already they have
created a model at Bayonne Medical Center whereby hospital employee and hospital employed physicians are providing outpatient care to uninsured patients. This will provide much needed continuity and reduce the cost of care in the county.

There's been much said about the issue of not for profit versus full profit hospitals. And I'll just close with a quote from Commissioner O'Dowd which she wrote in her approval of the CN for the acquisition of Hoboken University Medical Center. And I quote: "The issue of the for profit status of the applicant is one that has been raised in other hospital transfers. As I believe is appropriate, neither staff nor the State Hospital Planning Board has ever determined that the for profit status as an entity is one that is relevant in the review of CN or licensing applications. In other areas of healthcare licensing such as term-long care we see primarily for profit ownership. There is no statutory or regulatory authority for treating for profit or not for profit entities differently in CN or licensing reviews. I also note that compliance with all CN and licensing requirements is equally enforced for all facilities whether not for profit, for profit or governmental." Add in closing I believe that this
acquisition is in the best interest of not just Christ Hospital but Hudson County and the State of New Jersey. And I urge the award of the transfer by the department. Thank you very much.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. I just want to emphasize, again, to keep it to three minutes because we have our hearing up until 8 o'clock. And so if we -- we have lots of speakers and we're not going to be able to go through this list. So if you have longer comments, please submit those in writing and not take that time.

John Tully, please.

MR. TULLY: Good evening. John Tully, J-O-H-N T-U-L-L-Y. I'll make up for some of those that might be running over. I'll keep it very brief. I'm on the Board of Trustees for Christ Hospital. I chair the Finance Committee. I've been with hospital for about three years now. My background, for what it's worth, I spent 16 years working with municipalities, not for profits, from a banking perspective, from a risk management perspective. And I can just say that clearly, the focus has been for the entire time I've been with the hospital on getting the best care for the community. Unfortunately, that comes with a cost, as you all know, in a community hospital like this. The
way the structure works, it just didn't work out so
that the hospital can turn not only a profit or even
remain running. I think it's important that you take
into consideration the community need and strongly urge
that you support the Hudson Holdco transaction. Thank
you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you, Mr. Tully. Ruth

MS MITCHELL: Good evening. Ruth

Mitchell, R-U-T-H M-I-T-C-H-E-L-L. Christ Hospital has
been prominent in my life. In addition to being a
resident of Jersey City for 30 years, I was a former
employee of Christ Hospital and I'm currently on the
Board and Chair of the Quality Committee. And in those
roles I had the unique perspective to learn about the
hospital's weaknesses as well as its special
strengths. In the hospital's long history of more than
100 years the hospital has been able to evolve, make
changes with the times, and with the current
environment. I believe that it's imperative that this
change happen and that we are supported in the change
and the acquisition of the hospital by Hudson Holdco.

Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Michael

Benz. Dr. Michael Benz. Dr. Aftab.
DR. KHAWAJA: I'm Dr. Aftab Khawaja, A-F-T-A-B K-H-A-W-A-J-A. Little tricky name. I'm associated with Christ Hospital since 1968. When I came there as an intern that was the first place I went to when I came to this country. Since then, I have served in various positions at Christ Hospital including chief of surgery for ten years, vice president of medical affairs for five years, president of the medical staff and I served on six important committees of the medical staff, the hospital and the Board of Trustees. I have been practicing in Jersey City exclusively since 1974 as a general surgeon and a vascular specialist. So there can be no doubt to my loyalty to Christ Hospital as well as my service to this community.

With that background, I strongly support the Hudson Holdco's acquisition of Christ Hospital. And I will tell you why I support that. Because personally if Christ Hospital could continue to function successfully as an independent entity, I will be very happy, but that's not possible. There is a need of significant financial investment with Hudson Holdco as it's promising to make. And, also, I think they have a tremendous opportunity with acquisition of two other hospitals in Hudson County to create an
integrated healthcare system which will be second to none. And in addition, it will be very helpful to the community because they will create centers of excellence here and prevent our patients from Hudson County having to go to other places to get quality care. Thank you very much.


MS ADAMS: Joyce Adams, J-O-Y-C-E A-D-A-M-S. I've been a trustee at Christ Hospital for 21 years. I'm also a resident of Jersey City. I was born here. I grew up here. I went to school year. I have raised my son here. And I've been active in this community for over 55 years. I first came to know Christ Hospital about 46 years ago when my son was a patient there. Since that time, many members of my family have considered this our hospital.

As a life long Hudson County resident I want this hospital to remain viable so that it could continue its 140-year tradition of providing quality healthcare. The sale of Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco guarantees the survival of the full service acute care facility in Jersey City.

Our emergency room will remain open and continue to treat tens of thousands of residents who desperately need care. The sale also means the

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continuation of hundreds of jobs for people in this
community. Christ Hospital cannot continue to serve
our community's needs if it is closed or if only a
portion of the facility is utilized for healthcare.
This is a city of about a quarter of a million people,
not counting the residents of surrounding cities that
utilize this hospital. We need more than one hospital
and we need this hospital to continue operating as a
full service acute care facility in Jersey City. I
fully support the acquisition of Christ Hospital to
Hudson Hospital Holdco. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Tsompanidis.

DR. TSOMPANIDIS: It's A-N-T-O-N-I-O-S
T-S-O-M-P-A-N-I-D-I-S. Good evening, members of the
State Health Planning Board. My name is Antonios
Tsompanidis. I'm the director of medical education and
the program director of Christ Hospital's Family
Medicine Residency Program and a Board certified family
physician. I'm here this evening in this capacity as
well as representing the Dean of UMDNJ School of
Osteopathic Medicine, the academic affiliate of the
program at Christ.

We are here to speak in support of the
transfer of ownership to Hudson Hospital Holdco. As
someone who was born in Jersey City, lived in Jersey
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City, has in Jersey City, who's family was treated at Christ Hospital and as a director of medical education at Christ, I feel it is crucial to the community that Christ Hospital remain a full service acute care facility. This is something that Hudson Hospital Holdco is committed to doing. The Family Medicine residents treat the local population, both insured and underserved, in the hospital as well as in the physician offices in the community. I have proposed expansion of our program with our academic affiliation, UMDNJ-SOM, and they completely embrace and support this. However, without the hospital we cannot expand to meet the growing needs of Hudson County for its residents and provide primary care physicians which the entire countries in dire need of. So the maintenance of Christ Hospital I will with simply allow this to occur. I'm available for questions. I thank you for your time. I gave you guys two minutes back.

MR. VANOVER: Good evening. My name is Timothy Vanover, T-I-M-O-T-H-Y V-A-N-O-V-E-R. And I'm a trustee of Christ Hospital. As a member of the Christ Hospital Board of Trustees I feel strongly that the transfer of ownership from Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco, L.L.C. will not only provide financial stability and preserve the hospital's history, but will
ensure the residents of Hudson County continue to receive quality healthcare. Christ Hospital has been an integral part of Hudson County community for 140 years as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. As a trustee and a member of the Episcopal Diocese I firmly believe the Christ Hospital's longstanding tradition of serving patients regardless of their ability to pay will not be -- will not change with the ownership and that Hudson Holdco is strongly committed to meeting the healthcare needs of the Jersey City residents. I urge you to approve this transfer.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Williams.

DR. WILLIAMS: Good evening. I'm Raashan. That's spelled R-A-A-S-H-A-N, Williams, W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak this evening. I'm Dr. Raashan Williams, a cardiologist who's been a member on staff at Christ Hospital since coming to Jersey City from New York after completing my fellowship. I have served in various capacities and I'm currently the medical director of the cardiac cath lab.

I want to give my strong support of the transfer of ownership to Hudson Holdco. I have long been in favor of the strength of Christ Hospital, both being a Jersey City resident as well as maintaining an
office in Union City where I serve patients and the
residents of north Hudson County. And I often find
that my patients from my office when they require
emergency care are admitted to Christ Hospital or they
will be called to the emergency room at Christ
Hospital. I believe that the owners of Hudson Holdco
will remain committed to maintaining the viability of
Christ Hospital as a full service hospital. And having
currently been on staff at both Bayonne Medical Center
as well as Hoboken University Medical Center I've seen
the changes that they were able to implement in such a
short period of time. I don't want to take anymore
time just to say that I strongly support the transfer
of ownership. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Witt.

DR. WITT: Good evening. My name is Dr.
I perform different functions. I am the physician and
owner of Hoboken Integrated Family Medicine, a private
medical practice located in Hoboken. I've been on
staff at Christ Hospital for more than ten years. And
I have served on the Board of Trustees for two years.
I am currently the Chair off the Bioethics Committee
and the Continuing Medical Education Committee at
Christ Hospital. I also served on the Board Quality
Committee. In addition, I am clinical professor of medicine for UMDNJ in Newark. And I am a hospitalist for the Christ Care Program which serves the uninsured and underinsured patients up at Christ Hospital. And I'm one of five physicians who serve that purpose. And it is in all of these different capacities that I fully support the sale of the hospital to Hudson Holdco. Christ Hospital serves a vital role in providing acute care in the Hudson County and Jersey City areas. And the transfer of ownership will ensure that the hospital will continue to fulfill its mission established more than 140 years ago of providing critical healthcare services to the community.

Also vital to the community is Christ Hospital's continuing commitment to the development and education of new physicians for Hudson County. The Family Medicine Residency Program at Christ Hospital is one of the few physician training programs that are available in Hudson County and provides much needed primary care physicians for the community. I've been a teaching physician for the past 12 years since graduating from residency myself. I stand behind the Board of Trustees' decision to support the acquisition of Christ Hospital.
by Hudson Holdco in order that the hospital continue to
thrive and provide its mission. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Syed Kazmi.

DR. KAZMI: Hi. Good afternoon. My
name is Syed Kazmi, S-Y-E-D K-A-Z-M-I. I've been
affiliated with Christ Hospital for more than two and a
half years now. I'm the hospitalist, also, one of the
teaching attending and also physician advisor for the
hospital. I fully support this acquisition by Hudson
Holdco for the hospital to continue as an acute care
facility. In my opinion as a physician I think it is
very important for us to realize that Christ Hospital
should continue as an acute care hospital and also for
the community, this area where we have served more than
45,000 ER visits last year and more than 9,000
admission to the hospital.

Hudson Hospital Holdco has a proven
track record of acquiring financially failing hospitals
and converting them into one of the finest places. We
have two examples, Hoboken and Bayonne. And I support
that acquisition and I fully hope that this will
continue with Christ Hospital and will also benefit.
And I think it's going to strive much better. In my
opinion, I think I should -- just like every other
person said, I fully support the acquisition. Thank
DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Yale Shulman. Dr. Yale Shulman. Ann Twomey.

MS TWOMEY: Good evening. I'm Ann Twomey. I'm president of Health Professionals and Allied Employees which is the union that represents the 420 nurses, registered nurses. A-N-N T-W-O-M-E-Y. And I'm here, also, to support the sale of Christ Hospital to Hudson Hospital Holdco or Hudson Holdco. With the approval of this sale there are going to be four out of six hospitals in Hudson County that are for profit.

At public hearings that took place before this, actually the bankruptcy process, representatives from Hudson Holdco did make representations to the public at community meetings that we didn't see reflected in some of the statements in the commitment to the Department of Health. So I just want to emphasize a couple of those and ask that you consider including some of those. And that includes issues such as to make sure that Christ Hospital stays as a full service hospital. Maintaining its current community based and inpatient services. That it conduct a hospital health needs assessment.

Number three, to assure access to care for all residents regardless of the insurance coverage. As you
may know that there has been models used to go out of
network. And that's a concern as to whether or not
everyone could get the care that they need. And as
such, to maintain insurance in network coverage. To
maintain jobs, current contracts, workers' rights,
staffing levels consistent with patient safety and
state regulations. And just so you know, they have
made a commitment to hire 100 percent of the registered
nurses to continue their employment, in fact, so that
ey they don't even have to reapply for jobs. So we
greatly appreciate that. Fiscal transparency we think
is going to be very important including, you know, what
things cost, what charges are made, and what profits
are earned. And in order to monitor that, we know that
the Department of Health is kind of strapped for staff
itself and it is quite busy, that we recommend that
part of the agreement is that Hudson Holdco actually
fund quality monitor for the purpose of reporting maybe
for a three year period of time to monitor the hospital
not only its operations but also to help determine and
keep track so that people can have someone to go to.
And finally, there's been a very strong
community group, very large and strong community group
within Jersey City. And as the Navigant report
implementation takes place we're asking that certain --
we all want a seat at the table, but we'd like the community to have a seat at the table because we believe they have a lot invested and they support this as do we. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Renee Steinhagen.

MS STEINHAGEN: Good evening. My name is Renee Stein. I'm from New Jersey Appleseed. R-E-N-E-S-T-E-I-N-H-A-G-E-N. No, need for -- I'm from New Jersey Appleseed. And the New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center has consistently intervened to try to protect the community, most importantly in the case of conversion to a for profit institution. Notwithstanding, I'd like -- we have a strong opposition to this particular sale, but we acknowledge that the department has already indicated to the bankruptcy court that it will not oppose the sale. So accordingly, we urge the department to take an active role in ensuring that the proposed sale does not result in diminished access to health services in the community.

We believe that the action must include the development of a strong, meaningful and targeted conditions that the Department intends to enforce. And such conditions must ensure the maintenance of service to Medicaid, uninsured and other indigent people and
current levels not just a percentage of value, fair
prising and contracting, maintenance of significant
unique clinical services such as psychiatric services
that are nowhere committed to be maintained, a
financial transparency and community accountability.

I make reference -- since this involves
the sale to the owners that currently own Bayonne and
Hoboken I make reference to incorporate herein
Appleseed's comment in the transfer of the sale from
the hospital authority to HUMC Holdco. And they're
incorporated. And I make specific reference to the
analysis we do of your obligations under the CN
provisions themselves and under the court cases in
virtuo. It's the importance of the Commissioner's
obligation to provide an analysis of this particular CN
will have on the delivery on healthcare especially
because citizens just do not have access to the very
data that the Department routinely collects and in some
cases doesn't release because of proprietary concerns.
I go through that data. And I'd like you to know
examining the track record of the potential licensee is
really at the heart of the CN process. And the
Department can't shut its eyes simply because of it's
political connections the new owners of this facility
may have to the Governor.

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I go on to discuss the Navigant report.

And it's very clear what the Navigant report does and what it doesn't do. It was an analysis based on three facilities that at the time were operated on a nonprofit basis. They were community assets. It goes through them from objective criteria of pay or mix the facilities, et cetera. It does not discuss how those facilities are operated. And therefore, the Navigant report falls short and actually doesn't provide a specific guide as to consolidate the services among the three facilities so as to ensure access to all Hudson County residents. And seen in this light we are demanding an open process and an open process that involves all stakeholders. And, also, a condition that the current owners will accept the outcome of that process and the department telling them what they can close and what they can't close. Our comments are set forth. And tomorrow we will talk about the monitor.

Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Nicole Mankowski.

MS MANKOWSKY: Nicole Mankowski, N-I-C-O-L-E M-A-N-K-O-W-S-K-I. I've been a registered nurse at Christ Hospital for the past 23 years. I'm also the president of HPA Local 5186. I represent the STATE SHORTHAND REPORTING SERVICE, INC.
400 nurses at Christ Hospital. For many years we've attempted to work with our administration to keep Christ Hospital financially solvent. We've made sacrifices to be sure that our hospital who would be there for our community.

When Christ Hospital first announced its intent to sell to Prime Health Care from California we knew there were better ways to save our hospital. We opposed this initial deal because we knew the impact would change from a nonprofit to a for profit can bring to a hospital, its workers, its patients, the community. We were witness to other hospitals in Hudson County and heard stories from California with Prime Health. We knew the potential loss of vital services, lack of access to care because of out of network business models, decline in working conditions, critical staffing cuts and lack of transparency.

In short, the profit could and often would come from before patients. So as we all know, Christ Hospital went into bankruptcy. Opening up the sale to a bidding process we believe has resulted in a better outcome. We reached out to the potential buyers of Christ early on. We're been successful in reaching a fair agreement with Hudson Holdco, one that we believe protects workplace rights, and most
importantly, staffing ratios which ensure safe patient care. We support the acquisition of Christ Hospital by Hudson Holdco. And we look forward to working with them to improve health care services here in Jersey City. We were pleased at the promises made by Hudson to maintain all the clinical services, honor our collective bargaining agreement and hire essentially all of the staff.

However, we cannot ignore this will be the fourth for profit hospital in Hudson County. We cannot ignore the possibility that despite promises services may be cut, staffing levels may decline, uninsured patients may be turned away. It is, therefore, up to the State to put these promises to written commitments.

I urge you on behalf of our patients and on behalf of the frontline caregivers caring for them to be vigilant in monitoring those agreements and the commitments made to us and to the community, maintain this hospital, its services and the staff, provide care to all regardless of their ability to pay or their insurance coverage.

Lastly I ask the state to include the community and the healthcare workers in any decisions or discussions on consolidation of services as

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considered by the Navigant report. Access to quality care in Hudson County relies on your decisions and oversight. Appreciate your time.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Paula Nevoso.

MS NEVOSO: Good evening, Planning Board. P-A-U-L-A N-E-V-O-S-O. I'll keep my remarks brief. We've heard a lot tonight about HHH. Nobody's really put a face on who these owners are. And I think it's my responsibility to do that. They are visionaries, good business people. They have a proven track record at Bayonne and now at Hoboken. This the best thing that could hospital to Christ Hospital at this time. I'm in full support of the acquisition.

Thank you.


MR. SPINA: Good evening. My name is Josephine Spina, J-O-S-E-P-H-I-N-E S-P-I-N-A. I'm a Christ Hospital employee for over 35 years. And a Jersey City resident tenth.

Working at Christ Hospital has been and is a truly fulfilling experience. I've seen many changes through the years, both good and bad. Through commitment of the hospital, leadership and their expertise Christ Hospital has managed to overcome some of the most difficult obstacles. It has continued to
provide quality healthcare to Jersey City residents and the surrounding communities.

The heart of Christ Hospital is its employees. Their dedication, loyalty, integrity are just a few of the qualities that exemplify them. And together with our dedicated medical and nursing staff the priority is to provide quality service to our patients every day. Christ Hospital has provided many employment opportunities to so many people who have created the Christ Hospital family. We hope we can continue to be employed for many more years to come.

When the hospital went public with the bankruptcy filing I cannot even begin to express the amount of outpouring concern that people expressed to help me wanting to know if the hospital was going to close. The need for Christ Hospital to remain a full service acute care hospital is vital to our community.

With that said, I fully support the acquisition of Christ Hospital by Hudson Hospital Holdco. And they have promised to maintain it as a full service acute care hospital and continue to provide the quality care to the community that we serve. Thank you for your time, and God bless Christ Hospital.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Ling Tolentino.
MS TOLENTINO: Good evening. My name is Linglingay Tolentino. L-i-n-g-l-i-n-g-a-y T-O-L-E-N-T-I-N-O. I'm a nurse in the emergency department of Christ Hospital for ten years and also a resident of Jersey City for over 20. My mother's a neonatologist. And when I was younger, I used to accompany her to the hospital in the middle of the night to see her new born babies. The nurses and the staff were always so accommodating and welcomed to me. In fact, they took care of me as a patient when I broke my arm and needed surgery. These are the nurses that gave me my high quality care and empathy. And it was because of this that I also became a nurse. I delivered my first child in Christ Hospital. And, once again, was impressed with the care that was given to me. Needless to say, I was saddened to hear that my place of employment and my community hospital that has there for me and my family throughout my stages in life filed for Chapter 11. But I am hopeful that Hudson Holdco will continue with the mission and values of Christ Hospital that I hold so dear. Therefore, I fully support the sale of Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Maryanne Costello.
MS COSTELLO: Maryanne Costello, M-A-R-I-A-N-N-E. Costello, C-O-S-T-E-L-L-O. Members of the State Health Planning Board, as a longtime resident of Jersey City I am currently a volunteer and president of the Auxiliary here at Christ Hospital. I have had many family members treated at this hospital and consider it a second home. With tough economic times I have watched Christ Hospital still put patients first.

I am in total support of Christ Hospital being acquired by Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. I truly believe that this organization can bring new life into our community hospital that we need to remain open as an acute care facility. Thank you for your time.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Teresa Salterella.

MS SALTERELLA: My name is Teresa, T-E-R-E-S-A. I am a longtime resident of Jersey City and have been part of the Christ Hospital family for many years. I work hard as both a volunteer and auxiliary member as a recording secretary and treasurer to ensure that our patients are taken care of.

I would like to give my is support to Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. to acquire Christ
Hospital to help this valuable community hospital remain open as a full service hospital. Thank you for your consideration.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you, ma’am. Kevin Morris.

MR. MORRIS: Good evening. My name is Kevin Morris, K-E-V-I-N M-O-R-R-I-S. I am a Jersey City resident, a member of the clergy and also a staff member of the Director of Pastoral Care at Christ Hospital. I'm here to express my support of the sale of Christ Hospital to Hudson Hospital Holdco. And I hope and pray that it continues to live into its mission if the State supports the Certificate of Need transfer. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Sarog Chawla.

MS CHAWLA: My name is S-A-R-O-G C-H-A-W-L-A. I have been A Jersey City resident for 20 years and I have worked in Christ Hospital for nine years. I have grown in Christ Hospital from clinical partner to now impatient care director. The people working over here, they work like a family. And the patients taken care like they are taking care of family. This hospital has the community needs in mind. And as Hudson Holdco has said that this hospital will be living as acute care facility. That is why I do
support this hospital. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Janet Estremera.

MS ESTREMER: Hi. My name is Janet J-A-N-E-T-E-S-T-R-E-M-E-R-A. Good evening. I've lived in Jersey City all my life. I'm also an employee at Christ Hospital. My family and I have been coming to Christ Hospital for many years. As a matter of fact, I have a ten-year old son who was born at Christ Hospital. So I hold Christ Hospital very dear to my heart. I'm in complete support of Hudson Holdco because I truly believe that they will preserve jobs and keep Christ Hospital has a full service acute care hospital in our community for many years to come which is why it's very important that this transfer of ownership be approved. So I thank you for your consideration, Board.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you: Paul Hebert.

MR. HEBERT: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Paul Hebert. It's P-A-U-L H-E-B-E-R-T. I am the director of marketing and public relations at Christ Hospital. I have not been here very long, just over two years, but during that time numerous community outreaches that we've conducted I can tell you right now Christ Hospital is a vital asset to this county. It needs to continue as a full service
acute care facility. And I know that Hudson Holdco
will do that for this institution. That's why I'm in
full support of this transfer of ownership. Thank you
very much.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Maria Darvy.
MS DARVY: Good evening. My name is
Maria Darvy, M-A-R-I-A-D-A-R-V-Y. I'm here as an
employee of Christ Hospital. And I want to express
that I am in full support of transfer of ownership of
Christ Hospital to Hudson Hospital Holdco. I feel this
is the best interest of not only Christ Hospital but
our entire community. This transfer of ownership will
help ensure a much needed recourse within our
community. I strongly urge that the CN application is
approved.
I've seen firsthand what the bankruptcy
information has done to the community, the fear that
it's put in people. And I feel very strongly seeing
what's happened at Bayonne as well as Hoboken that we,
too, will be able to keep our doors open and be able to
continue the quality care to all of the community that
we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Peter Wong.
DR. WONG: Good evening Peter Wong,
P-E-T-E-R W-O-N-G. I'm a practicing cardiologist in
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Jersey City for over 20 years and I've served in different capacities in different hospitals for the past 20 years. Interestingly, this is my third hearing, also, supporting the approval of both the sale of Bayonne, sale of Hoboken and now the sale of Christ. To this particular group for those who had doubts or had questions about whether these owners would live up to their promises, I can testify to the fact that they have at Hoboken and Bayonne. Our service there has actually quite improved.

A different perspective I'd like to give you in terms of the benefit of the sale would be the first time I've seen it. One of the issues that we always had in Hudson County, that each of the hospitals had had, always competing against each other. The State has always talked about an integrated plan, how to deliver care in Hudson County. And that has never happened. For the first time over the past couple of months I see a real plan forming where the delivery of certainly cardiac care is being formulated for the first time. For the past two months we've had leaders of Hoboken and leaders in Bayonne actually working together to coordinate care to keep patients in Hudson County. Just last week we had actually for the first time two patients from emergency room with heart
attacks that normally would be shipped to outside
institutions actually stay within our institution we
cared for.

So I fully support this transaction.

And I think the promises that these owners -- I've
found the proof of the pudding is in the eating. I
think they've done that at Bayonne and Hoboken.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Phyllis Kaye.

MS SALOWE-KAYE: My name is
Executive Director of New Jersey Citizen Action. For
the last many months we have been working closely with
groups in Jersey City, particularly the Save Christ
Hospital Coalition and HPAE that represents many of the
employees at Christ Hospital.

Our staff actually went door to door in
the neighborhoods that are served by the hospital
talking to individuals, asking them about their use of
the hospital, their experiences with the hospital and
their concerns about the future of the hospital. More
than 5,000 people in Jersey City signed postcards
stating that they wanted to see that this consolidation
followed -- that this -- as we move forward that this
sale had certain principals that were adhered to. They
sign these postcards asking the State of New Jersey to
set conditions for the sale of the hospital. It is really important for citizen action and the community that the Certificate of Need is transferred with some very specific provisions. Strong guidelines must be set in any conversion from a nonprofit hospital to a for profit hospital. The community input is really essential both through this process and into the future. And you heard previous testimony about involving community members in future discussions on the hospital.

There needs to be a binding commitment of service and staffing levels must be made -- there must be a commitment that staffing levels must remain where they are and specific commitments need to be made which we're hearing have been made for current hospital employees. The hospital must remain a healthcare facility forever. And a long-term commitment must be made to maintain this hospital as an acute care hospital. Too many people that we spoke to depend on this hospital to have the proceedings that are going to take place from now into the future not involve the community members of Jersey City and those folks who use this hospital. Citizen action urges you to approve the Certificate of Need with the strong conditions that will preserve the mission of Christ Hospital that has
been active and participating in the community for many, many years. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. And good work collecting all those 5,000 surveys. Michael DePasavo, director of facilities at Christ. Anaka Prakesh.

DR. PRAKESH: Good evening. A-N-A-K-A-P-R-A-K-E-S-H. I'm a practicing gastroenterologist in Hudson County for the last 32 years. I have been affiliated with all the hospitals in this area. When the hospital went bankrupt we were very skeptical profit hospital coming to our town. And to tell you the truth, that is best thing ever happened to Bayonne Hospital. I'm in charge of the GI department there and we have the state of the art endoscopy unit including arthroscopic ultrasound, which is very modern, and is only present in Bayonne Hospital. That shows the commitment of the new owners. And I just came back from the national meeting. We're following the quality measurements in endoscopy. And I can tell you we are in par with the best hospital in the country. So I would urge that this is the best thing which is going to happen to Christ Hospital. This is from my experience. And also, it has been important to say that the owners are very well willing to work with the physicians which I had not seen before with the
previous administrations even though they were not for profit. So I strongly urge that this be done for the help of the Christ Hospital and the community. Thank you very much.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Ghias Moussa.

DR. MOUSSA: G-H-I-A-S. Last name M-O-U-S-S-A. I serve currently as a chairman of department of medicine at Christ Hospital. I've been in Hudson County for the last five years. And I truly support the purchase of Christ Hospital by Hudson Holdco. We went through rough time, but obviously with the input of the new money we will but able to survive and serve the community even more. We thank you for your support, also. Thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Yale Shulman.

DR. SCHULMAN: Yale Schulman, Y-A-L-E S-H-U-L-M-A-N. I'm a urologist. I've been practicing in Hudson County at all the hospitals including Christ Hospital for the last 30 years. I'm the chief of the division of urology. And I'm recently chair of the department surgery. I have a very strong connection. I do rounds at Christ Hospital, but that's not why I'm here. I'm here to speak in support of the sale of
Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco. The hospital is a much needed asset for the community and for the individual patients. The hospital in order for it to survive needs a model that I believe Christ Hospital by Hudson Holdco will provide with its expertise in managing hospitals. It will provide and has provided the much needed infusion of capital which the hospital needs. The infrastructure is badly in need of money. The operating room that I intentionally affiliated with needs replacement or support of much outdated equipment. So I believe based on my experience at Christ Hospital and my contact with other physicians that Hudson Hospital Holdco will provide the solution to maintain a viable Christ Hospital. Thank you.


MR. BELLAN-BOYER: Good evening. And thank you for coming to Jersey City. Paul Bellan-Boyer, B-E-L-L-A-N B-O-Y-E-R. I represent Christ Hospital, the community Coalition which brought together 18 different community and advocacy groups to get involved in the sale process of Christ Hospital precisely because of the importance of Christ Hospital to our community and the passion which so many of our residents feel about that.

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We would like to highlight really just two things tonight. First of all, we want to fully support the points already mentioned by Ms Ann Twomey and HPAE. We are especially concerned that the sale be conditioned upon several things. Full detailed and enforceable commitments to service, staffing and continued operations consistent with the public representations that Hudson Holdco has made. Also, strong and enforceable conditions on access and the establishment of an independent healthcare monitor.

With strong conditions we think that this sale is in the best interest of the community and we would recommend its adoption as long as we not only trust but also verify.

Secondly, Hudson Holdco speaks of making Christ Hospital and their other properties centers of excellence. This is something we truly applaud. As a community coalition we care about our hospitals and we want them to be great centers of healthcare. But we also know that this should not and cannot take place in isolation. In fact, that’s part of what lead to Christ Hospital’s distressed condition as we saw in the sale process. Hospital boards and administrations working in isolation do not always produce the kind of outcomes their institutions and our communities needs.
So we would ask that also as a condition of sale you establish not simply another toothless community oversight board or commission charged with implementing the Navigant's report. That group should include representatives of the county's hospital system, the workers in those hospitals and independent community members. And we also recommend that you make those recommendations or the output of that process, in fact, binding and enforceable on the hospitals participating. Thank you very much.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Anyone else in the audience that hasn't signed but wants to come up to the podium to give a few remarks? So we'll take a recess, a five-minute recess, and reconvene after that.

(Whereupon there is a recess.)

DR. ALAIGH: We have no new speakers who have signed up here. Are there -- is there anyone else who wants to say anything? All right. If not --

MR. CONROY: We're going to stay in the event someone straggles in late. So we need to stay here for a bit longer, but it's not necessary for us to just stare at one another. I want to thank everybody and their courtesy for staying and coming back to the hearing, but since we do not have any other speakers signed up at this point it is not necessary to sit here.

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at attention. You're welcome to stay, but we will recess until we have a speaker.

DR. ALAIGH: So we're going to be here until 8 o'clock in case there is some additional speakers. The one thing I do logistically for everyone, just a moment, if you haven't got your parking voucher we have someone from Christ here, Janet, in the second row if you wanted a parking voucher. But, again, those who are leaving us I thank you so much for sharing your thoughts, your sentiments and your perspective. Very knowledgeable. Thank you.

(Whereupon there is a recess.)

DR. ALAIGH: For the public, we're out of recess, back in session. And our next speaker is Stephanie Simon.

MS SIMON: And I can barely speak which is why I wasn't planning to speak, also. So S-T-E-P-H-A-N-I-E S I M O N. I'm the assistant director of the department of psychiatry at Christ Hospital. I've been there for 15 years. And I strongly, strongly support the sale of Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco. I think it's the best thing for this hospital. There was some commentary made before regarding psychiatric services. My full understanding in all the meetings that we've been having is that
there is an absolute commitment to retain psychiatric services. And in fact, with the advent of the system, there's a lot of opportunities because there's psychiatric patients throughout the entire system and we can really work together nicely.

So I'm very excited about it. I'm happy to be here. Christ Hospital's been wonderful to me for many years. And, you know, it was difficult to see it go through what it's been through, but I feel like we've been steered in the right direction and that we're going to be okay. So thank you.

DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Anybody else?

Okay. So we're back in recess now.

(Whereupon there is a recess.)

DR. ALAIGH: We're out of recess now.

Back in session. And there are no additional individuals who want to make any public comment at this time. And it is -- it's near 8 o'clock. So we are concluding our public hearing session for the transfer of ownership of Christ Hospital.

(Whereupon the matter is adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, CARMEN WOLFE, a Certified Court Reporter and Registered Professional Reporter Notary Public of the State of New Jersey hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings as taken stenographically by me on the date and place hereinbefore set forth.

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