John Bonanni
County Administrator, County of Morris
Before the New Jersey State Health Planning Board
In Support of Approval of Saint Clare's Certificate of Need Application
Public Hearing Held in Dover
July 22, 2013

Good evening. I am John Bonanni, the Morris County Administrator.

I am here tonight on behalf of the Board of Chosen Freeholders to offer full support for Saint Clare's Health System's Certificate of Need applications and for Prime Healthcare Services' acquisition of Saint Clare's Health System with acute care hospitals in Denville and Dover as well as behavioral health and other facilities throughout Morris County.

In my experience as Administrator for Morris County, I know first-hand of the benefits that Saint Clare's has provided for the communities in our area.

The County and Saint Clare's have mutually benefited from our long-standing relationship, including partnering to address disasters, especially Hurricanes Irene and Sandy, to ensure that residents were able to access the care they needed.

I'm especially proud of our collaboration at the nonprofit mall located at the Central Park of Morris County, where Saint Clare's Behavioral Health Services serves as an anchor tenant – offering mental health, recovery and wellness programs. By bringing together nonprofit mental health programs in one location, as a County, we are working to provide cost-effective shared services assisted by Saint Clare's Health System.

The hospitals in Dover and Denville were financially supported and built by the community to meet their needs. Saint Clare's has been a resource and important asset to many individuals. It is vital for that work to continue.

I had the opportunity to meet with Les Hirsch, president and CEO of Saint Clare's, and Fred Ortega of Prime to discuss the proposed acquisition. I am confident that Prime is ready and capable to assure Saint Clare's future viability.

Saint Clare's is one of the largest employers in the County and it is very important to the region's economy and economic development opportunities. I was especially pleased to know that Prime plans to hire substantially all of Saint Clare's employees.

Time is of the essence and I urge you to approve Saint Clare's certificate of need application.

Thank you.