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

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Wednesday, May 23, 2012

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11 B E F O R E: DR. POONAM ALAIGH
WILLIAM CONROY
12 DEVON GRAF

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23 STATE SHORTHAND REPORTING SERVICE, INC.
P.O. BOX 227
24 ALLENHURST, NEW JERSEY 07711
732-531-9500 FAX 732-531-7968
25 ssrs@stateshorthand.com

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

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

22 Information gathered at this hearing
23 will be reviewed by the State Health Planning Board.
24 In addition to reviewing the application from Hudson,
25 Hospital Opco, L.L.C. and the Department staff's

1 analysis and recommendations in a public meeting.

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

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

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

22 Anyone who wants to submit written
23 comments after tonight's hearing and before the Board
24 meeting is urged to do so. Such comments must be
25 submitted no later than Wednesday, May 30th and should

1 be addressed to the State Health Planning Board in care
2 of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

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

16 The Board can recommend approval of the
17 application, approval with conditions or denial of the
18 application before it.

19 The Commissioner will make the final
20 decision on the application after the Board makes its
21 recommendation. Thank you, everyone. And we will get
22 started.

23 Our first speaker is Jerramiah Healy.
24 Please spell your first and last name so that we can
25 transcribe it.

1 MR. HEALY: Jerramiah Healy, Mayor of
2 Jersey City. J-e-r-r-a-m-i-a-h. Healy is H-e-a-l-y.
3 Good evening, everyone and Commissioners. I've been
4 asked to read this letter which I've already submitted.
5 It's a very short letter, so I'll read it. "Dear
6 members of the Commission and Deputy Attorney General,
7 gownsman, I write in support of the transfer of
8 ownership of Christ Hospital from Christ Hospital to
9 Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. Transfer will not only
10 provide financial stability to the hospital, also
11 preserve the hospital's mission and hopefully ensure
12 that the residents of Hudson County long served by this
13 institution continue to receive the best possible
14 quality health care. Thank you for your consideration.
15 Please contact me if you have -- if you need any
16 further information."

17 But I can't stop there. I have three,
18 minutes. Right? So I have about two minutes and 10
19 seconds left. I just want to say that Christ Hospital
20 has a tremendous tradition here not just in Jersey
21 City. I would say easily from Journal Square up to the
22 north end of Jersey City, including a good portion of
23 our northern neighbors, Union City and North Bergen
24 serving at least 200,000 residents between -- among
25 those three places. Maybe 250,000 residents. And it's

1 urgent that that healthcare continue to be provided to
2 all of our citizens. And we were happy with the
3 process. We're happy with the new owners, or the
4 perspective new owners. And we urge you to approve
5 this transfer so that the high standard, high quality
6 of care that Christ Hospital has delivered decade, upon
7 decade, upon decade to our city and our two cities just
8 to the north of us so that that can continue. And our
9 concern is that healthcare certainly be available to
10 all of your citizens. And we urge that you approve
11 this transfer. Thank you very much.

12 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Mr. Peter Kelly.
13 Just state your name and spell your full name, please.

14 MR. KELLY: Good evening. My name is
15 Peter Kelly. That's P-E-T-E-R K-E-L-L-Y. And I'm the
16 present Chief Executive Officer of Christ Hospital.
17 And I come before you tonight to advocate in the
18 strongest possible terms the approval by the New Jersey
19 Department of Health and Senior Services the
20 Certificate of Need application to transfer the
21 operating license of Christ Hospital to the new owners,
22 Hudson Hospital Health, Holdco, L.L.C. Christ Hospital
23 has served the healthcare needs of the residents of
24 Hudson County for 140 years. We're the second largest
25 hospital in the county providing a wide spectrum of

1 clinical services including 50,000 emergency room
2 visits per year to our patients, regardless of their
3 ability to pay. Christ Hospital is also one of the
4 largest employers in Jersey City and Hudson County.

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

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

20 As a result of our failure to secure and
21 ensure long-term financial stability Christ Hospital
22 was forced to file for protection under Chapter 11 of
23 the Federal Bankruptcy Code on February 6, 2012. In a
24 very transparent auction process Hudson Holdco --
25 Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. whose principals on Bayonne

1 Medical Center and Hoboken University Medical Center
2 was awarded the right to purchase Christ Hospital by
3 Judge Morris Stern after an open auction in his court
4 on March 27, 2012. While the order by Judge Stern
5 marked the end of a long and painful financial journey
6 for Christ Hospital, it also marked the beginning of a
7 new and exciting opportunity to provide healthcare
8 services for the residents of Jersey City, Hudson
9 County and the State of New Jersey. The owners of
10 Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. have articulated a
11 vision for a new integrated healthcare delivery system
12 that will provide high quality care at lower cost,
13 while at the same time providing greater access to all
14 levels of care including preventative care, ambulatory
15 care, inpatient care and long-term care. Such
16 coordinated care will improve treatment outcomes on all
17 levels to the residents of our city and our county.
18 Hospitals and physicians will become partners committed
19 to a level of collaboration that will create a model of
20 care consistent with attention to patient affection and
21 Affordable Care Act.

22 In the bankruptcy court Hudson Hospital
23 Holdco leadership pledged not only to maintain but
24 improve access to care for the underinsured and
25 uninsured residents of the region. Already they have

1 created a model at Bayonne Medical Center whereby
2 hospital employee and hospital employed physicians are
3 providing outpatient care to uninsured patients. This
4 will provide much needed continuity and reduce the cost
5 of care in the county.

6 There's been much said about the issue
7 of not for profit versus full profit hospitals. And
8 I'll just close with a quote from Commissioner O' Dowd
9 which she wrote in her approval of the CN for the
10 acquisition of Hoboken University Medical Center. And
11 I quote: "The issue of the for profit status of the
12 applicant is one that has been raised in other hospital
13 transfers. As I believe is appropriate, neither staff
14 nor the State Hospital Planning Board has ever
15 determined that the for profit status as an entity is
16 one that is relevant in the review of CN or licensing
17 applications. In other areas of healthcare licensing
18 such as term-long care we see primarily for profit
19 ownership. There is no statutory or regulatory
20 authority for treating for profit or not for profit
21 entities differently in CN or licensing reviews. I
22 also note that compliance with all CN and licensing
23 requirements is equally enforced for all facilities
24 whether not for profit, for profit or governmental."

25 Add in closing I believe that this

1 acquisition is in the best interest of not just Christ
2 Hospital but Hudson County and the State of New Jersey.
3 And I urge the award of the transfer by the department.
4 Thank you very much.

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

12 John Tully, please.

13 MR. TULLY: Good evening. John Tully,
14 J-O-H-N T-U-L-L-Y. I'll make up for some of those that
15 might be running over. I'll keep it very brief. I'm
16 on the Board of Trustees for Christ Hospital. I chair
17 the Finance Committee. I've been with hospital for
18 about three years now. My background, for what it's
19 worth, I spent 16 years working with municipalities,
20 not for profits, from a banking perspective, from a
21 risk management perspective. And I can just say that
22 clearly, the focus has been for the entire time I've
23 been with the hospital on getting the best care for the
24 community. Unfortunately, that comes with a cost, as
25 you all know, in a community hospital like this. The

1 way the structure works, it just didn't work out so
2 that the hospital can turn not only a profit or even
3 remain running. I think it's important that you take
4 into consideration the community need and strongly urge
5 that you support the Hudson Holdco transaction. Thank
6 you.

7 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you, Mr. Tully. Ruth
8 Mitchell.

9 MS MITCHELL: Good evening. Ruth
10 Mitchell, R-U-T-H M-I-T-C-H-E-L-L. Christ Hospital has
11 been prominent in my life. In addition to being a
12 resident of Jersey City for 30 years, I was a former
13 employee of Christ Hospital and I'm currently on the
14 Board and Chair of the Quality Committee. And in those
15 roles I had the unique perspective to learn about the
16 hospital's weaknesses as well as its special
17 strengths. In the hospital's long history of more than
18 100 years the hospital has been able to evolve, make
19 changes with the times, and with the current
20 environment. I believe that it's imperative that this
21 change happen and that we are supported in the change
22 and the acquisition of the hospital by Hudson Holdco.
23 Thank you.

24 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Michael
25 Benz. Dr. Michael Benz. Dr. Aftab.

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

16 With that background, I strongly support
17 the Hudson Holdco's acquisition of Christ Hospital.
18 And I will tell you why I support that. Because
19 personally if Christ Hospital could continue to
20 function successfully as an independent entity, I will
21 be very happy, but that's not possible. There is a
22 need of significant financial investment with Hudson
23 Holdco as it's promising to make. And, also, I think
24 they have a tremendous opportunity with acquisition of
25 two other hospitals in Hudson County to create an

1 integrated healthcare system which will be second to
2 none. And in addition, it will be very helpful to the
3 community because they will create centers of
4 excellence here and prevent our patients from Hudson
5 County having to go to other places to get quality
6 care. Thank you very much.

7 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Joyce Adams.

8 MS ADAMS: Joyce Adams, J-O-Y-C-E
9 A-D-A-M-S. I've been a trustee at Christ Hospital for
10 21 years. I'm also a resident of Jersey City. I was
11 born here. I grew up here. I went to school year. I
12 have raised my son here. And I've been active in this
13 community for over 55 years. I first came to know
14 Christ Hospital about 46 years ago when my son was a
15 patient there. Since that time, many members of my
16 family have considered this our hospital.

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

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

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

12 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Tsompanidis.

13 DR. TSOMPANIDIS: It's A-N-T-O-N-I-O-S

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

23 We are here to speak in support of the
24 transfer of ownership to Hudson Hospital Holdco. As
25 someone who was born in Jersey City, lived in Jersey

1 City, has in Jersey city, who's family was treated at
2 Christ Hospital and as a director of medical education
3 at Christ, I feel it is crucial to the community that
4 Christ Hospital remain a full service acute care
5 facility. This is something that Hudson Hospital
6 Holdco is committed to doing. The Family Medicine
7 residents treat the local population, both insured and
8 underserved, in the hospital as well as in the
9 physician offices in the community. I have proposed
10 expansion of our program with our academic affiliation,
11 UMDNJ-SOM, and they completely embrace and support
12 this. However, without the hospital we cannot expand
13 to meet the growing needs of Hudson County for its
14 residents and provide primary care physicians which the
15 entire countries in dire need of. So the maintenance
16 of Christ Hospital I will with simply allow this to
17 occur. I'm available for questions. I thank you for
18 your time. I gave you guys two minutes back.

19 MR. VANOVER: Good evening. My name is
20 Timothy Vanover, T-I-M-O-T-H-Y V-A-N-O-V-E-R. And I'm
21 a trustee of Christ Hospital. As a member of the
22 Christ Hospital Board of Trustees I feel strongly that
23 the transfer of ownership from Christ Hospital to
24 Hudson Holdco, L.L.C. will not only provide financial
25 stability and preserve the hospital's history, but will

1 ensure the residents of Hudson County continue to
2 receive quality healthcare. Christ Hospital has been
3 an integral part of Hudson County community for
4 140 years as a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of
5 Newark. As a trustee and a member of the Episcopal
6 Diocese I firmly believe the Christ Hospital's
7 longstanding tradition of serving patients regardless
8 of their ability to pay will not be -- will not change
9 with the ownership and that Hudson Holdco is strongly
10 committed to meeting the healthcare needs of the Jersey
11 City residents. I urge you to approve this transfer.

12 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Williams.

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

22 I want to give my strong support of the
23 transfer of ownership to Hudson Holdco. I have long
24 been in favor of the strength of Christ Hospital, both
25 being a Jersey City resident as well as maintaining an

1 office in Union City where I serve patients and the
2 residents of north Hudson County. And I often find
3 that my patients from my office when they require
4 emergency care are admitted to Christ Hospital or they
5 will be called to the emergency room at Christ
6 Hospital. I believe that the owners of Hudson Holdco
7 will remain committed to maintaining the viability of
8 Christ Hospital as a full service hospital. And having
9 currently been on staff at both Bayonne Medical Center
10 as well as Hoboken University Medical Center I've seen
11 the changes that they were able to implement in such a
12 short period of time. I don't want to take anymore
13 time just to say that I strongly support the transfer
14 of ownership. Thank you.

15 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Witt.

16 DR. WITT: Good evening. My name is Dr.

17 Virginia Witt, V-I-R-G-I-N-I-A W-I-T-T. As a physician
18 I perform different functions. I am the physician and
19 owner of Hoboken Integrated Family Medicine, a private
20 medical practice located in Hoboken. I've been on
21 staff at Christ Hospital for more than ten years. And
22 I have served on the Board of Trustees for two years.
23 I am currently the Chair off the Bioethics Committee
24 and the Continuing Medical Education Committee at
25 Christ Hospital. I also served on the Board Quality

1 Committee. In addition, I am clinical professor of
2 medicine for UMDNJ in Newark. And I am a hospitalist
3 for the Christ Care Program which serves the uninsured
4 and underinsured patients up at Christ Hospital. And
5 I'm one of five physicians who serve that purpose.

6 And it is in all of these different
7 capacities that I fully support the sale of the
8 hospital to Hudson Holdco. Christ Hospital serves a
9 vital role in providing acute care in the Hudson County
10 and Jersey City areas. And the transfer of ownership
11 will ensure that the hospital will continue to fulfill
12 its mission established more than 140 years ago of
13 providing critical healthcare services to the
14 community.

15 Also vital to the community is Christ
16 Hospital's continuing commitment to the development and
17 education of new physicians for Hudson County. The
18 Family Medicine Residency Program at Christ Hospital is
19 one of the few physician training programs that are
20 available in Hudson County and provides much needed
21 primary care physicians for the community. I've been a
22 teaching physician for the past 12 years since
23 graduating from residency myself.

24 I stand behind the Board of Trustees'
25 decision to support the acquisition of Christ Hospital

1 by Hudson Holdco in order that the hospital continue to
2 thrive and provide its mission. Thank you.

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

4 DR. KAZMI: Hi. Good afternoon. My
5 name is Syed Kazmi, S-Y-E-D K-A-Z-M-I. I've been
6 affiliated with Christ Hospital for more than two and a
7 half years now. I'm the hospitalist, also, one of the
8 teaching attending and also physician advisor for the
9 hospital. I fully support this acquisition by Hudson
10 Holdco for the hospital to continue as an acute care
11 facility. In my opinion as a physician I think it is
12 very important for us to realize that Christ Hospital
13 should continue as an acute care hospital and also for
14 the community, this area where we have served more than
15 45,000 ER visits last year and more than 9,000
16 admission to the hospital.

17 Hudson Hospital Holdco has a proven
18 track record of acquiring financially failing hospitals
19 and converting them into one of the finest places. We
20 have two examples, Hoboken and Bayonne. And I support
21 that acquisition and I fully hope that this will
22 continue with Christ Hospital and will also benefit.
23 And I think it's going to strive much better. In my
24 opinion, I think I should -- just like every other
25 person said, I fully support the acquisition. Thank

1 you.

2 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Dr. Yale

3 Shulman. Dr. Yale Shulman. Ann Twomey.

4 MS TWOMEY: Good evening. I'm Ann

5 Twomey. I'm president of Health Professionals and

6 Allied Employees which is the union that represents the

7 420 nurses, registered nurses. A-N-N T-W-O-M-E-Y. And

8 I'm here, also, to support the sale of Christ Hospital

9 to Hudson Hospital Holdco or Hudson Holdco. With the

10 approval of this sale there are going to be four out of

11 six hospitals in Hudson County that are for profit.

12 At public hearings that took place

13 before this, actually the bankruptcy process,

14 representatives from Hudson Holdco did make

15 representations to the public at community meetings

16 that we didn't see reflected in some of the statements

17 in the commitment to the Department of Health. So I

18 just want to emphasize a couple of those and ask that

19 you consider including some of those. And that

20 includes issues such as to make sure that Christ

21 Hospital stays as a full service hospital. Maintaining

22 its current community based and inpatient services.

23 That it conduct a hospital health needs assessment.

24 Number three, to assure access to care for all

25 residents regardless of the insurance coverage. As you

1 may know that there has been models used to go out of
2 network. And that's a concern as to whether or not
3 everyone could get the care that they need. And as
4 such, to maintain insurance in network coverage. To
5 maintain jobs, current contracts, workers' rights,
6 staffing levels consistent with patient safety and
7 state regulations. And just so you know, they have
8 made a commitment to hire 100 percent of the registered
9 nurses to continue their employment, in fact, so that
10 they don't even have to reapply for jobs. So we
11 greatly appreciate that. Fiscal transparency we think
12 is going to be very important including, you know, what
13 things cost, what charges are made, and what profits
14 are earned. And in order to monitor that, we know that
15 the Department of Health is kind of strapped for staff
16 itself and it is quite busy, that we recommend that
17 part of the agreement is that Hudson Holdco actually
18 fund quality monitor for the purpose of reporting maybe
19 for a three year period of time to monitor the hospital
20 not only its operations but also to help determine and
21 keep track so that people can have someone to go to.

22 And finally, there's been a very strong
23 community group, very large and strong community group
24 within Jersey City. And as the Navigant report
25 implementation takes place we're asking that certain --

1 we all want a seat at the table, but we'd like the
2 community to have a seat at the table because we
3 believe they have a lot invested and they support this
4 as do we. Thank you.

5 DR. ALAIGH: Renee Steinhagen.

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

21 We believe that the action must include
22 the development of a strong, meaningful and targeted
23 conditions that the Department intends to enforce. And
24 such conditions must ensure the maintenance of service
25 to Medicaid, uninsured and other indigent people and

1 current levels not just a percentage of value, fair
2 prising and contracting, maintenance of significant
3 unique clinical services such as psychiatric services
4 that are nowhere committed to be maintained, a
5 financial transparency and community accountability.

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

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

20 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Nicole
21 Mankowski.

22 MS MANKOWSKY: Nicole Mankowski,
23 N-I-C-O-L-E M-A-N-K-O-W-S-K-I. I've been a registered
24 nurse at Christ Hospital for the past 23 years. I'm
25 also the president of HPA Local 5186. I represent the

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1 400 nurses at Christ Hospital. For many years we've
2 attempted to work with our administration to keep
3 Christ Hospital financially solvent. We've made
4 sacrifices to be sure that our hospital who would be
5 there for our community.

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

18 In short, the profit could and often
19 would come from before patients. So as we all know,
20 Christ Hospital went into bankruptcy. Opening up the
21 sale to a bidding process we believe has resulted in a
22 better outcome. We reached out to the potential buyers
23 of Christ early on. We're been successful in reaching
24 a fair agreement with Hudson Holdco, one that we
25 believe protects workplace rights, and most

1 importantly, staffing ratios which ensure safe patient
2 care. We support the acquisition of Christ Hospital by
3 Hudson Holdco. And we look forward to working with
4 them to improve health care services here in Jersey
5 City. We were pleased at the promises made by Hudson
6 to maintain all the clinical services, honor our
7 collective bargaining agreement and hire essentially
8 all of the staff.

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

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

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

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

4 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Paula Nevoso.

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

15 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Josephine Spina.

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

20 Working at Christ Hospital has been and
21 is a truly fulfilling experience. I've seen many
22 changes through the years, both good and bad. Through
23 commitment of the hospital, leadership and their
24 expertise Christ Hospital has managed to overcome some
25 of the most difficult obstacles. It has continued to

1 provide quality healthcare to Jersey City residents and
2 the surrounding communities.

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

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

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

25 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Ling Tolentino.

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

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

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

15 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Teresa
16 Salterella.

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

24 I would like to give my is support to
25 Hudson Hospital Holdco, L.L.C. to acquire Christ

1 Hospital to help this valuable community hospital
2 remain open as a full service hospital. Thank you for
3 your consideration.

4 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you, ma'am. Kevin
5 Morris.

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

15 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Sarog Chawla.

16 MS CHAWLA: My name is S-A-R-O-G
17 C-H-A-W-L-A. I have been A Jersey City resident for
18 20 years and I have worked in Christ Hospital for nine
19 years. I have grown in Christ Hospital from clinical
20 partner to now inpatient care director. The people
21 working over here, they work like a family. And the
22 patients taken care like they are taking care of
23 family. This hospital has the community needs in mind.
24 And as Hudson Holdco has said that this hospital will
25 be living as acute care facility. That is why I do

1 support this hospital. Thank you.

2 DR. ALAIGH: Janet Estremera.

3 MS ESTREMERERA: Hi. My name is Janet

4 J-A-N-E-T E-S-T-R-E-M-E-R-A. Good evening. I've lived

5 in Jersey City all my life. I'm also an employee at

6 Christ Hospital. My family and I have been coming to

7 Christ Hospital for many years. As a matter of fact, I

8 have a ten-year old son who was born at Christ

9 Hospital. So I hold Christ Hospital very dear to my

10 heart. I'm in complete support of Hudson Hospital

11 Holdco because I truly believe that they will preserve

12 jobs and keep Christ Hospital has a full service acute

13 care hospital in our community for many years to come

14 which is why it's very important that this transfer of

15 ownership be approved. So I thank you for your

16 consideration, Board.

17 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you: Paul Hebert.

18 MR. HEBERT: Good evening, ladies and

19 gentlemen. My name is Paul Hebert. It's P-A-U-L

20 H-E-B-E-R-T. I am the director of marketing and public

21 relations at Christ Hospital. I have not been here

22 very long, just over two years, but during that time

23 numerous community outreaches that we've conducted I

24 can tell you right now Christ Hospital is a vital asset

25 to this county. It needs to continue as a full service

1 acute care facility. And I know that Hudson Holdco
2 will do that for this institution. That's why I'm in
3 full support of this transfer of ownership. Thank you
4 very much.

5 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Maria Darvy.

6 MS DARVY: Good evening. My name is
7 Maria Darvy, M-A-R-I-A D-A-R-V-Y. I'm here as an
8 employee of Christ Hospital. And I want to express
9 that I am in full support of transfer of ownership of
10 Christ Hospital to Hudson Hospital Holdco. I feel this
11 is the best interest of not only Christ Hospital but
12 our entire community. This transfer of ownership will
13 help ensure a much needed recourse within our
14 community. I strongly urge that the CN application is
15 approved.

16 I've seen firsthand what the bankruptcy
17 information has done to the community, the fear that
18 it's put in people. And I feel very strongly seeing
19 what's happened at Bayonne as well as Hoboken that we,
20 too, will be able to keep our doors open and be able to
21 continue the quality care to all of the community that
22 we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

23 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Peter Wong.

24 DR. WONG: Good evening Peter Wong,

25 P-E-T-E-R W-O-N-G. I'm a practicing cardiologist in
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1 Jersey City for over 20 years and I've served in
2 different capacities in different hospitals for the
3 past 20 years. Interestingly, this is my third
4 hearing, also, supporting the approval of both the sale
5 of Bayonne, sale of Hoboken and now the sale of Christ.
6 To this particular group for those who had doubts or
7 had questions about whether these owners would live up
8 to their promises, I can testify to the fact that they
9 have at Hoboken and Bayonne. Our service there has
10 actually quite improved.

11 A different perspective I'd like to give
12 you in terms of the benefit of the sale would be the
13 first time I've seen it. One of the issues that we
14 always had in Hudson County, that each of the hospitals
15 had had, always competing against each other. The
16 State has always talked about an integrated plan, how
17 to deliver care in Hudson County. And that has never
18 happened. For the first time over the past couple of
19 months I see a real plan forming where the delivery of
20 certainly cardiac care is being formulated for the
21 first time. For the past two months we've had leaders
22 of Hoboken and leaders in Bayonne actually working
23 together to coordinate care to keep patients in Hudson
24 County. Just last week we had actually for the first
25 time two patients from emergency room with heart

1 attacks that normally would be shipped to outside
2 institutions actually stay within our institution we
3 cared for.

4 So I fully support this transaction.

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

8 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Phyllis Kaye.

9 MS SALOWE-KAYE: My name is

10 P-H-Y-L-L-I-S S-A-L-O-W E, hyphen, K-A-Y-E. I'm the
11 Executive Director of New Jersey Citizen Action. For
12 the last many months we have been working closely with
13 groups in Jersey City, particularly the Save Christ
14 Hospital Coalition and HPAE that represents many of the
15 employees at Christ Hospital.

16 Our staff actually went door to door in
17 the neighborhoods that are served by the hospital
18 talking to individuals, asking them about their use of
19 the hospital, their experiences with the hospital and
20 their concerns about the future of the hospital. More
21 than 5,000 people in Jersey City signed postcards
22 stating that they wanted to see that this consolidation
23 followed -- that this -- as we move forward that this
24 sale had certain principals that were adhered to. They
25 sign these postcards asking the State of New Jersey to

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1 set conditions for the sale of the hospital. It is
2 really important for citizen action and the community
3 that the Certificate of Need is transferred with some
4 very specific provisions. Strong guidelines must be
5 set in any conversion from a nonprofit hospital to a
6 for profit hospital. The community input is really
7 essential both through this process and into the
8 future. And you heard previous testimony about
9 involving community members in future discussions on
10 the hospital.

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

1 been active and participating in the community for
2 many, many years. Thank you.

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

6 DR. PRAKESH: Good evening. A-N-A-K-A
7 P-R-A-K-E-S-H. I'm a practicing gastroenterologist in
8 Hudson County for the last 32 years. I have been
9 affiliated with all the hospitals in this area. When
10 the hospital went bankrupt we were very skeptical
11 profit hospital coming to our town. And to tell you
12 the truth, that is best thing ever happened to Bayonne
13 Hospital. I'm in charge of the GI department there and
14 we have the state of the art endoscopy unit including
15 arthroscopic ultrasound, which is very modern, and is
16 only present in Bayonne Hospital. That shows the
17 commitment of the new owners. And I just came back
18 from the national meeting. We're following the quality
19 measurements in endoscopy. And I can tell you we are
20 in par with the best hospital in the country. So I
21 would urge that this is the best thing which is going
22 to happen to Christ Hospital. This is from my
23 experience. And also, it has been important to say
24 that the owners are very well willing to work with the
25 physicians which I had not seen before with the

1 previous administrations even though they were not for
2 profit. So I strongly urge that this be done for the
3 help of the Christ Hospital and the community. Thank
4 you very much.

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

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

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

18 DR. SCHULMAN: Yale Schulman, Y-A-L-E
19 S-H-U-L-M-A-N. I'm a urologist. I've been practicing
20 in Hudson County at all the hospitals including Christ
21 Hospital for the last 30 years. I'm the chief of the
22 division of urology. And I'm recently chair of the
23 department surgery. I have a very strong connection.
24 I do rounds at Christ Hospital, but that's not why I'm
25 here. I'm here to speak in support of the sale of

1 Christ Hospital to Hudson Holdco. The hospital is a
2 much needed asset for the community and for the
3 individual patients. The hospital in order for it to
4 survive needs a model that I believe Christ Hospital by
5 Hudson Holdco will provide with its expertise in
6 managing hospitals. It will provide and has provided
7 the much needed infusion of capital which the hospital
8 needs. The infrastructure is badly in need of money.
9 The operating room that I intentionally affiliated with
10 needs replacement or support of much outdated
11 equipment. So I believe based on my experience at
12 Christ Hospital and my contact with other physicians
13 that Hudson Hospital Holdco will provide the solution
14 to maintain a viable Christ Hospital. Thank you.

15 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Paul
16 Bellan-Boyer.

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

1 We would like to highlight really just
2 two things tonight. First of all, we want to fully
3 support the points already mentioned by Ms Ann Twomey
4 and HPAE. We are especially concerned that the sale be
5 conditioned upon several things. Full detailed and
6 enforceable commitments to service, staffing and
7 continued operations consistent with the public
8 representations that Hudson Holdco has made. Also,
9 strong and enforceable conditions on access and the
10 establishment of an independent healthcare monitor.
11 With strong conditions we think that this sale is in
12 the best interest of the community and we would
13 recommend its adoption as long as we not only trust but
14 also verify.

15 Secondly, Hudson Holdco speaks of making
16 Christ Hospital and their other properties centers of
17 excellence. This is something we truly applaud. As a
18 community coalition we care about our hospitals and we
19 want them to be great centers of healthcare. But we
20 also know that this should not and cannot take place in
21 isolation. In fact, that's part of what led to Christ
22 Hospital's distressed condition as we saw in the sale
23 process. Hospital boards and administrations working
24 in isolation do not always produce the kind of outcomes
25 their institutions and our communities needs.

1 So we would ask that also as a condition
2 of sale you establish not simply another toothless
3 community oversight board or commission charged with
4 implementing the Navigant's report. That group should
5 include representatives of the county's hospital
6 system, the workers in those hospitals and independent
7 community members. And we also recommend that you make
8 those recommendations or the output of that process, in
9 fact, binding and enforceable on the hospitals
10 participating. Thank you very much.

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

15 (Whereupon there is a recess.)

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

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

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

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

12 (Whereupon there is a recess.)

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

16 MS SIMON: And I can barely speak which
17 is why I wasn't planning to speak, also. So
18 S-T-E-P-H-A-N-I-E S I M O N. I'm the assistant
19 director of the department of psychiatry at Christ
20 Hospital. I've been there for 15 years. And I
21 strongly, strongly support the sale of Christ Hospital
22 to Hudson Holdco. I think it's the best thing for this
23 hospital. There was some commentary made before
24 regarding psychiatric services. My full understanding
25 in all the meetings that we've been having is that

1 there is an absolute commitment to retain psychiatric
2 services. And in fact, with the advent of the system,
3 there's a lot of opportunities because there's
4 psychiatric patients throughout the entire system and
5 we can really work together nicely.

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

12 DR. ALAIGH: Thank you. Anybody else?

13 Okay. So we're back in recess now.

14 (Whereupon there is a recess.)

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

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

21

22 (Whereupon the matter is adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, CARMEN WOLFE, a Certified Court
Reporter and Registered Professional Reporter Notary
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