

Date: 11 December 2017

Subject: Howard County Citizens Association Fully Supports Hospital Budget Requests

Good Evening. My name is Stu Kohn and tonight I am testifying as the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA. We fully support the requested 2018 - 5 million dollars and 3 million annually that the Howard County General Hospital is asking you to provide in the County budget. Hopefully, you will see fit to be extremely hospitable towards their request. It is fully warranted and deserves to be a top priority for all your constituents. There is overwhelming compelling evidence which constitutes immediate attention for the Health of our County. The Health of our County is in your hands. All one has to do is look at the 2016 Fiscal Year statistics displayed on the hospital's website. It is so alarming it begs the question can we really afford to continue to develop unless drastic action is taken. It reads as follows:

- HCGH provided services to approximately 220,000 people or 69% of the County Population
- Evaluated and treated 78,072 patients in the Emergency Rooms or 25% of the County Population
- Admitted to or observed in the hospital 25,205 patients
- Performed 12,390 surgeries; of these, 3,360 were performed in the hospital and 9,030 were performed as outpatient procedures.
- Delivered 3,597 babies
- Provided outpatient services to 68,680 patients (including laboratory / excluding outpatient surgery)
- Provided outreach and wellness programs to more than 40,000 people

These numbers are undoubtedly very impressive. With our population being 317,233 as of 2016 and referring to PlanHoward2030, Figure 6-10 we will have 33,350 more units built by 2030 or approximately nearly 100,000 additional residents. It is obviously imperative that as County Executive, you and the County Council declare the Hospital's request as being the highest priority.

When the President of the Hospital, Steve Snelgrove who is extremely concerned and asking for support then we all need to listen and take the necessary action. He states in his Open Letter to the Community, "The hospital is not the right size for the community we serve. And despite operating at capacity, we are planning to care for a senior population that will double in a decade, while also keeping pace with the county's population growth. It should be abundantly clear by now that Howard County's health care needs have outpaced the hospital's resources, and without action now, our quality of life will be eroded. County residents are well aware of this need. Many residents ask whether Howard County General Hospital has the capacity to accommodate expected growth and an aging population. The frank answer is we do not."

The need of the Hospital as described in their “Howard County General Hospital Campus Project” paper clearly answers what is planned to be accomplished and the why. Thus it is your obligation to ensure that the growth of our County in no way outpaces our health infrastructure. Yes – infrastructure is not only roads and schools. It is the Hospital, Police, Fire, and EMS which all should be a part of our Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, APFO. In Steve Snelgrove’s Open Letter, the Hospital is requesting the County provide 3 million dollars on an annual basis similar to funding for non-profit organizations which has been in the County budget for years to benefit county residents who rely on their services.

We, HCCA have one major request that these categories become an essential part of APFO. In our opinion when the Hospital’s request is hopefully approved it is no longer a private institution as public funding through taxpayer’s dollars is aiding the hospital. Thus, APFO is an important ingredient to ensure that our Quality of Life be given the highest priority over development and we incorporate measurements to protect our residents.

We urge the County Executive and Council to not in any way hesitate when considering this budget request. It is truly in the best interest for all concerned parties and especially since it is the season to be jolly. Good health to you. The Howard County Citizens Association wishes all a Happy Holiday and New Year.

Thank You.

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President