



Howard County Citizens Association
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The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 8 March 2018

Subject: Howard County Citizens Association Fully Supports Hospital Budget Requests

Good Evening. My name is Stu Kohn. I am testifying as the President of the Howard County Citizens Association, HCCA. We fully recognize that the County's 2019 budget as the County Executive has stated, "will be very tight." Obviously we need to be as frugal as possible to be extremely wise and not penny foolish. However, by investing in the Health of our County we fully support the Howard County General Hospital's 5 million dollars one-time request and their asking for 3 million annually. In the Baltimore Sun, Howard County section on Sunday it was stated the Spending Affordability Advisory Committee recommended implementing an ambulance fee as Howard County is the only jurisdiction in Maryland without such a fee paid by insurance companies. The Committee estimated this fee could bring 3 to 5 million to the County annually. If you cannot find the money then this would satisfy the request. We ask you to be most hospitable in granting this request as this is undoubtedly a very compelling need for all the 317,233 residents as stated in the 2016 census. The Hospital provided services to approximately 220,000 people or 69% of the County Population in 2016 as reported on their website. In addition they performed the following:

- 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 statistics are indeed very daunting. It is 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 not only listen but 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 environment needs have outpaced the hospital's resources and without action now, our quality of life will be eroded. 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 Hospital, and for that matter our Police, Fire, and EMS should all be a part of our Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, APFO, because we should be much better than just adequate. Referring to PlanHoward2030, Figure 6-10 we will have 33,350 more units built by 2030 or approximately another 100,000 additional residents. As you know HCCA has been emphasizing these categories become an essential part of APFO. We unfortunately realize we are just exercising our tonsils to probably no avail. 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. The lack of an APFO implementation is in no way a show stopper. HCCA firmly believes the Hospital's budget request is more than warranted regardless of the incorporation of APFO.

The Health of our County is in your hands and our Council. Please do not hesitate to just do the right thing and please see this request is your top priority. It would go a long ways to ensure our quality of life is the prime concern of the County and the necessary action will be taken. We simply need to be fully prepared for our future and this future is now!

Thank You.

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President