

To: Julie Sonier, director
Health economics program
Mn. Dept of Health

1/20/2008

Dear Julie,

We are writing to express our support for the psychiatric/chemical dependency hospital being proposed in Woodbury, MN. We are residents and taxpayers in Woodbury. We are both nurses. I work in the local community hospital that does not have any psychiatric beds. When people come to the E.R. seeking help for their crisis/mental health issue, they wait for hours with no psychiatric care, only to be transferred upstairs to a med-surg bed which absolutely does not meet their need, since there is no psychiatric care. They frequently wait for days, only to pay for an ambulance transport when a psychiatric bed becomes available, in many instances - hours away. Patients seeking help are often suicidal and sometimes homicidal. It seems to me they deserve immediate help. It is a shame that we add insult to injury by not providing the help they need. Do we need the blood of these people and/or their loved ones on our hands before we do something.

Prairie St Johns has proposed a solution to Minnesota's deficit of psychiatric beds. It is incomprehensible to us that they are being met with resistance when there is such an obvious need.

We need psychiatric beds and at least the leaders of prairie St Johns want to and are willing to help with the mental health crisis. Please encourage the legislature to approve the proposed hospital! Sincerely, Judith A. Johnson
Todd Johnson