



Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
St. Paul Province

Commissioner Jan Malcolm
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975



April 20, 2018

Dear Commissioner Malcolm,

Does it matter if St. Joseph's Hospital in St. Paul closes? When Health Partners (HIP) and its hospital, Regions, recently requested an additional 100 beds requiring an exception to an existing hospital building moratorium, in S.F. 2892 / H.F. 3202, we became alarmed at how this seemingly simple exception could impact our whole state. We ask that this legislation not be voted on until the Minnesota Department of Health provides a complete and thorough assessment of this exception's impact on healthcare delivery in Saint Paul and the State of Minnesota.

NB

We are concerned that this exception could result in the loss of:

- St. Joseph's Hospital in St. Paul. (That would be a loss of approximately 200 active beds and about 1400 employees.)
- 105 inpatient beds in St. Paul dedicated to caring for patients experiencing mental health and chemical dependency crises.
- St. Paul's only Catholic Hospital.

Long term, we believe this legislation could limit access, harm patients, and hurt area community hospitals while directly benefitting Regions/HealthPartners over its competitors. This includes people suffering from mental health and addiction issues.

Due to the critical need for mental health & chemical dependency care, St. Joseph's recently opened 50 additional beds to bring this unit's total number of beds to 105. Working closely with Catholic Charities in downtown St. Paul, these beds are routinely filled. As you know, these beds are filled primarily with patients on Medicaid or charity care. Without the financial support of its other beds, this is not a sustainable model over time. As an insurance company as well as healthcare provider, Health Partners is able to offer financial incentives to encourage use of Regions, even by those who might otherwise choose to go somewhere else.

In the 165 years since the St. Paul Province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJs) founded St. Joseph's Hospital, we have given our lives in service to our "Dear Neighbors" most in need throughout St. Paul, Minnesota and beyond. We are concerned that this decision could disrupt healthcare services statewide.

Sincerely,

Sister Marie Herbert Seiter, CSJ (former 12 year board member for Health East)

P.S. Health Partners plan does not address the need for mental health / chem dep's beds until 2025. Rather, it proposes med-surg and orthopedic beds in the first years of the plan. This will result in empty, excess beds in St Paul. PLEASE - refrain from making this recommendation until a complete, thorough assessment is done.