



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

Statement of Senator Thomas K. Duane RE: Urgent Care Coming to Manhattan's Lower West Side via North Shore-LIJ and VillageCare's Announced Partnership

THOMAS K. DUANE August 26, 2010

| ISSUE: **HEALTH**

Finally, after much advocacy and hard work, The North Shore-LIJ Health System (NS-LIJ) has announced a plan, in affiliation with VillageCare, to operate a 24-hour urgent care center at 121A West 20 Street on the Lower West Side of Manhattan.

I and the community expect that the proposed facility will provide the highest quality, state-of-the-art urgent care possible and that the New York State Department of Health (DOH) will quickly approve the project. That said, actions speak louder than words. Nothing can be taken for granted. We must remain vigilant until this facility is operational and we can be sure that it is providing the same level of high-quality, culturally sensitive care to all who need it regardless of their ability to pay.

Since the devastating closure of St. Vincent's Hospital, I have maintained that we must not only preserve the health care that remains on the Lower West Side but also strengthen various components of health care, including primary care, geriatrics, behavioral health including substance abuse treatment, and services for people living with HIV/AIDS. The proposed urgent care center is just one area in which we must invest while we continue to

work towards reestablishing a full service hospital with an emergency room.

Lower Manhattan's Community Boards, community members, other elected officials, including New York State Assembly Members Dick Gottfried and Deborah Glick, Congress Member Jerry Nadler, New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, organized labor, and many others have worked long and hard to see the establishment of an urgent care center to serve the St. Vincent's community. Today's announcement is a positive step but only one step toward the restoration of essential health care services on Manhattan's Lower West Side.

I will continue to work with DOH to see that the NS-LIJ/VillageCare plan is approved and fully funded. And I will continue to fight for further investment in the full range of health care services for all who live and work in our communities, regardless of ability to pay.

As NS-LIJ moves forward with the urgent care center on West 20 Street, I will remain vigilant in my oversight regarding any development plans for the former St. Vincent's Hospital site, east and west of Seventh Avenue and 12th Street.