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July 25, 2013

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor
State of New York
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

Andrew —

I write to you regarding the continuing health care crisis in Brooklyn, as has been described by the Berger Commission, the Medicaid Redesign Team and other analysis. There is a need to develop a comprehensive solution to the county's crisis – financially challenged hospitals, lack of clinics and ambulatory care, declining Medicaid reimbursement rates, reduced state support for hospitals for safety-net that aligns the health care needs of 2.5 million people with the health care resources and provider strengths of the Borough.

As you are aware, the existing trends are unsustainable. I commend you for recognizing that fact, and for your desire to restructure, fortify, and improve health care delivery in Brooklyn. In order to put Brooklyn on that path to success, I urge you to issue an executive order that establishes a commission similar to the one called for in my legislation S.5916/A.8119. This bill begins by analyzing the county's health care needs and makes determinations from analysis necessary to create a system to provide high quality and sustainable health care to the people of Brooklyn. (Please find the legislation and bill memo attached.)

Unlike previous "study bills," this legislation uses two studies to create a commission that will put forth recommendations that view Brooklyn's crisis not as a problem, but as an opportunity to transform healthcare delivery and improve health outcomes in an economically balanced manner. To put it bluntly, Brooklyn has a 19th Century health care system, and the goal of the Brooklyn Health Commission will be to change that into a 21st Century system that provides quality health to New York's largest county in a manner that will be a model for the rest of the state.

As your commissioners and aides have noted, gaining access to federal Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) and other resources is critical to achieving this goal, and should be included – along with other applicable federal, state, local and other funds – in the final plan to re-organize, re-imagine and renew Brooklyn's health care systems. I agree, and am ready and willing to assist in gaining those funds so that they may be used to save Downstate Medical Center and re-

establish it as the vital center of a hospital and health care network that will address the borough's health care challenges and opportunities.

To accomplish this goal, there are five prerequisites for the Commission.

- First, it is critical that the commission members are qualified, and represent and understand the needs of the people of Brooklyn, which would be achieved through an appointment process that combines a search for excellence along with key stakeholder input.
- Second, the commission must conduct an epidemiological study of Brooklyn to ascertain the needs of the different areas of the Brooklyn, and take into account longitudinal demographic changes.
- Third, the study must complete a comprehensive usability analysis of the health care services and resources currently present and offered in Brooklyn.
- Fourth, the commission must also undertake a study on the economic impact of the potential loss of health care services on Brooklyn, and the benefit(s) that would arise from averting closure of existing facilities and the potential redesign of the borough's health care delivery systems and provider network.
- Finally, as noted above, the process must include stakeholder input and be transparent so that the people of Brooklyn, the provider communities, and elected officials will all buy into and support the final plan that will emerge, whether that plan uses a public benefit corporation to organize the new Brooklyn health network, or in whatever manner emerges from the process.

To move forward with a solution for Brooklyn's crisis, we must have the trust of the people who live and work there. The establishment of a health care commission that is structured and given a mandate as set forth in my legislation will accomplish that due to its ability to allow stakeholder input, responsible oversight by the appointing parties, and a comprehensive approach to a redesign of Brooklyn's health care systems that not only works, but will set a statewide and potentially national model.

Thank you for your consideration for this critical request. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of assistance.

Yours in Partnership,



KEVIN PARKER

Enc.

cc: H. Carl McCall
Karim Camara
Eric Adams
John Sampson
Velmanette Montgomery
Nick Perry
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