



September 20, 2018

Commissioner Howard Zucker
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza,
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Commissioner Zucker,

We are writing to request your guidance and assistance in addressing reports we have received regarding the conditions of the emergency department at the Moses Campus of the Montefiore system. We recently met with several nurses employed by Montefiore among with the New York State Nurses Association who expressed growing concerns regarding increased wait times, overcrowding, and unsafe hallway placement in Montefiore's emergency departments.

We have discussed these issues with both the nurses and the leadership at Montefiore. Each party has a contrasting perspective on the scope of the issue and the possible solutions, which include:

1. **Reopening units at Westchester Square Medical Center.** Montefiore has space at Westchester Square that can be utilized for open beds and patient care areas. This would reduce pressure on other facilities, but would apparently require a Certificate of Need.
2. **Identifying potential patient rooms in all of Montefiore Bronx hospitals and produce a schedule to reopen closed beds.** Each Montefiore Bronx hospital (Moses, Weiler, and Westchester Square) has patient-care space that has been converted into administrative space.
3. **Expanding emergency services at North Central Bronx Hospital,** which is adjacent and physically connected with Montefiore Medical Center, but is a part of the NYC Health + Hospitals system.
4. **Closing the Ebola unit and repurposing it for emergency patient care.**

It is our understanding that the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) has a critical role in determining the viability of some of these options, as they would require the approval of a Certificate of Need. As we consider each of the solutions proposed by the various stakeholders, we would like to inquire as to the position of the NYSDOH in issuing a Certificate of Need to open additional beds at emergency rooms in the area and on the proposed solutions mentioned above. In addition, we would also like to discuss whether reports of overcrowding in emergency rooms have become more common



**SENATOR
GUSTAVO RIVERA**
33rd DISTRICT

**NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE**
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



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throughout New York State since the implementation of DSRIIP and how the NYSDOH is addressing such issues as they arise.

As elected representatives of the unhealthiest county in New York State, we are very aware that we need to continue working to ensure that our residents have access to quality medical care, whether that is emergency or primary care. Constituents from both of our districts rely on Montefiore's emergency department to receive care in their time of need. Therefore, we are respectfully requesting a meeting or conference call to discuss the reported overcrowding issues at Montefiore facilities in the Bronx and how our state government can best act to improve patient care in emergency situations.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

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Gustavo Rivera
33rd Senate District
New York State Senate

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamaal T. Bailey".

Jamaal T. Bailey
36th Senate District
New Your State Senate