



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO ASSESS THE IMPACT OF A PROPOSED MERGER OF FOUR HISTORIC SOUTH SIDE MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS

WHEREAS, in the beginning days of the 21st Century, four historic safety-net hospitals who have served this city's South Side communities since the mid 1800's and the dawn of the 20th Century have signed a tentative agreement creating an innovative, bold, and equally historic preliminary agreement; and

WHEREAS, this memorandum of understanding agrees to unite their collective resources, and over the next ten years, replace their aging infrastructures by constructing of a state-of-the-art healthcare system that will serve many future generations of South Siders; and

WHEREAS, these hospitals will work together under a new name and new leadership to provide an optimum level of health care to South Side residents by opening three to six community health care centers where nearby residents can see a doctor, access advanced diagnostics, and receive preventative care as well as obtain social services thereby identifying, preventing, and treating disease earlier to improve overall health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, infant mortality rate on the South Side is roughly 80 percent higher than the city's average overall and nearly double the average for the State of Illinois. South Side residents are nearly 150 percent more likely to die of tobacco-related complications than people living in the Loop, Near North Side or Lincoln Park. Additionally, living south of the Loop doubles your risk of death due to stroke or heart disease; and

WHEREAS, according to United States census data and research provided by New York University, the City of Chicago has a more than 30-year life expectancy gap, which is the largest life expectancy gap in the country. One of the most highly correlated factors impacting health outcome is income and some South Side neighborhoods have a median household income 60 percent below the state average; and,

WHEREAS, a person's zip code should not dictate a person's ability to access world-class health care in the right setting close to home; and

WHEREAS, hospital utilization data demonstrates that South Side emergency rooms are used to treat a disproportionately high number of ambulatory-sensitive conditions, indicating a need for access to primary and preventive care; and

WHEREAS, 58 percent of patients in Southeast Chicago are deciding to leave the region to seek care at centers of excellence. As a result, Chicago's South Side overall has 52 percent more inpatient beds than needed as inpatient volume continues to decline, consistent with national trends; and

WHEREAS, Advocate Trinity Hospital, Mercy Hospital & Medical Center, South Shore Hospital, and St. Bernard Hospital are the four institutions that are collaborating to form one organization to ameliorate these persistent and systemic health inequities. These hospitals serve patients who reside primarily between 25th Street to the north, 138th street to the south, Lake Michigan and the Indiana state line to the east, and Western Avenue to the west; and

WHEREAS, this nascent healthcare system is committed to closing no currently functioning facility before new facilities are operational. The number of health care jobs and continuity of care will be maintained. In pledging to construct at least one new state-of-the art destination hospital and several community health centers, this new system has the potential to

positively impact health equity on the South Side of this city by increasing net jobs in the region as well as expanding access to quality primary and preventative care services; and

WHEREAS, the need for hospital transformation has long been recognized by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services. The four hospitals must phase out aging facilities as some of their current buildings have served Chicago's South Side for more than one hundred years. The new organization has analyzed data provided by a recent Community Health Needs Assessment as well as other health data, driving their plans for hospital transformation; and

WHEREAS, since the community will have significant interest in where these new facilities will be located, what will be done with the sites of old facilities, and what health services should be offered close to home, the new organization is engaging in outreach to the community to get feedback. It behooves this body to provide a civic venue for this transformative healthcare venture; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the undersigned members of the City of Chicago City Council, gathered on this 18th Day of March, 2020 A.D., do hereby direct the Committee on Health and Human Relations to hold a hearing during the summer of 2020 in order to take testimony from representatives of the four hospitals as well as from any citizen who resides within the area bounded by 25th Street to the north, 138th street to the south, Lake Michigan and the Indiana state line to the east, and Western Avenue to the west.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the aldermen who represent any portion of the aforementioned area be asked to provide the committee with the names and contact information for any of the interested community-based civic organizations within their wards who may have an interest in providing input on this vital issue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Advocate Trinity Hospital, Mercy Hospital & Medical Center, South Shore Hospital, and St. Bernard Hospital.

Roderick T. Sawyer Alderman - 6th Ward

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