

CCMC **Coleman County Medical Center** CCMC
310 SOUTH PECOS, COLEMAN, TEXAS 76834 • (325) 625- 2135 FAX 625-3895

August 6, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I wish to formally write you on behalf of the Coleman County Medical Center and its support of Hendrick Medical Center's purchase of the Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As the Chief Executive Officer and on behalf of the Medical Staff of the Coleman County Medical Center; we believe this will strengthen and consolidate care to the Abilene community and surrounding region.

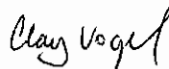
Addressing the need for expansion and access to specialized care in rural communities continues to be a growing concern. Rural communities are very much challenged as populations in those areas decline, yet the cost of providing care and difficulties recruiting providers continues to escalate. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The Coleman County Medical Center greatly depends on the access to those specialized services that small hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are unable to provide.

Hendrick, over the years, has grown to become a premier healthcare organization providing both primary and extensive specialty care. With this growth has come the challenges of meeting the needs with available resources and space. This need will be better served by Hendrick Medical Center with access to specialized and high-acuity services for Abilene Regional and surrounding counties.

CCMC **Coleman County Medical Center** CCMC
310 SOUTH PECOS, COLEMAN, TEXAS 76834 • (325) 625- 2135 FAX 625-3895

Hendrick has always partnered with CCMC on caring for patients regardless of the financial hurdles both face with the growing numbers of both charity and uninsured patients. This model of patient care driven by faith and integrity is one that aligns itself with the mission and values of our philosophy at the Coleman County Medical Center and.

Sincerely,



Clay Vogel
Chief Executive Officer
Coleman County Medical Center

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Abilene Independent School District

241 Pine Street • Abilene, Texas 79601 • (325) 677-1444

September 16, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Superintendent of the Abilene Independent School District, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

Abilene Independent School District

241 Pine Street • Abilene, Texas 79601 • (325) 677-1444

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,



David Young, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

September 16, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

As the lead for the organization responsible for the public workforce system across a 19-county region, Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, is supportive of the Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. We believe this will be beneficial to the Abilene community and surrounding communities based on Hendrick's past record of collaboration with rural healthcare providers.

As is true for many other rural areas in Texas, the West Central region is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals with less capacity, rising costs, a population that is older than the state average, as well as a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanding access is key to maintaining the economies of our local communities. Without access to quality care, attracting and retaining businesses becomes a greater challenge. Many of our region's current community hospitals were struggling prior to COVID-19, but are now facing the prospect of reducing services further or even closures. Even larger hospitals, such as Abilene Regional, are unable to offer many of the specialized services essential for a quality healthcare system.

Fortunately, Hendrick, as a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care, is an exception. Unfortunately, Hendrick currently faces capacity constraints that prevent expansion of services to meet patient demand. For current Abilene Regional patients, becoming part of the Hendrick network will expand access to specialized and high-acuity services both in Abilene and to the residents in the 20+ surrounding counties who regularly travel to Abilene for services.

Commissioner Wilson

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We also believe this new venture will improve talent attraction and retention for both parties. As the public workforce system, we've had a long-standing and positive relationship with Hendrick and know they are committed to employee training and development. We have partnered with them on numerous efforts to successfully upskill and train employees throughout their system. Their reputation as a quality workplace is widely known and allows them to attract individuals from outside of Abilene and Texas.

As a community-based, not-for-profit provider of healthcare services, Hendrick has a deep and long-standing commitment to providing access to all residents without regard to their ability to pay for services. I've personally been involved with a variety of community-based activities supported by Hendrick and have seen the benefits to vulnerable populations as well as the community as a whole. Hendrick's longstanding investment in the local community as a partner and corporate citizen is widely known and has made them a trusted resource for quality healthcare services for Abilene and the surrounding communities for multiple generations of West Texans.

We support the proposed acquisition and believe it will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled healthcare professionals, expand medical services, and improve access to high-quality healthcare at the lowest cost. As we all know, healthcare is an important component in maintaining the vitality of Abilene and our rural communities. This is an opportunity to strengthen and stabilize our healthcare system today that will serve us well into the future.

Sincerely,



Mary Ross
Executive Director

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



August 28, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
Cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Bomar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson:

Please consider this letter in support of the Hendrick Medical Center (HMC) purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center (ARMC) from Community Health Systems Inc.

It has been my privilege to practice internal medicine in Abilene Texas since 1984. During my tenure, I have held various leadership roles within the medical community, currently serving as the president of Abilene Diagnostic Clinic, P.L.L.C. (ADC), medical director of the ARMC ICU, and a member of the advisory Board of Directors at ARMC. The cornerstone of my practice, along with many of my physician peers has been Abilene Diagnostic Clinic. Operating as an independent physician owned multispecialty group, ADC has been providing quality medical care to Abilene and the surrounding communities for more than 50 years. The clinic is currently comprised of 40 providers. My partners and I have had the opportunity to be associated with and practice at both Hendrick Medical Center and Abilene Regional Medical Center, with members of ADC having served as Chief of Staff at both facilities.

Over the past 10 to 15 years, ADC has noticed an increasing schism between the north (HMC) and south (ARMC) medical communities, which has affected the delivery of patient care. There appear to be multiple factors responsible for this division, including an increased number of employed physicians on both the ARMC and HMC campuses, physicians opting to align with a single system, as well as a recently completed syndication arrangement between ARMC and several local physicians. No side bears full responsibility, but division among the systems has been widely felt throughout the medical community. The announcement of HMC's proposed purchase of ARMC has produced some anxiety and apprehension among the south Abilene physician community, which historically has been associated with ARMC. ADC was initially concerned regarding our relationship with HMC, if the ARMC purchase was approved and Hendrick Medical Center became the sole provider of inpatient medical care in Abilene.

However, I am pleased to report that HMC administration has unilaterally reached out to ADC providers and initiated discussions regarding building a mutually beneficial relationship between HMC and ADC, as well as with other south side physicians. We have agreed upon and are committed to a cooperative physician recruitment and retention plan to ensure that there will be adequate number of quality medical providers in our community. HMC has reassured ADC of their intent to support the independent structure of providers and groups like ours.

HMC has also shared their initial plans for the ARMC campus, which include a sizable capital investment for much-needed improvements and expansion of patient care capabilities at ARMC. Capital infusion is essential to the continued successful operation of the ARMC campus. HMC plans to defragment the provision of care in the Abilene community with their committed intent to immediately provide one uniform (EMR) electronic medical record system for both inpatient and outpatient practices.

The current owner of ARMC, (Community Health Systems) has worked with ADC in a cooperative manner in the past. However, CHS continues to contribute only minimal amounts of the capital support necessary for ARMC to maintain the quantity and quality levels of care required for the institution to fulfill its duty in the Abilene community. Over the past 5 years, ARMC average daily patient census has diminished by approx. 25%. I believe this decline to be predominantly due to the simple inability to financially fund the level of care that was provided 5-10 years ago, much less expand access, quality and quantity of care.

Competition is generally preferable in any market system. However, the financial challenges facing CHS Inc. are well documented and severe. If there should be an abrupt CHS departure from Abilene, then there would ensue a sudden and severe disruption of medical care in south Abilene. Following which, HMC would remain as the only provider of inpatient care in Abilene. The proposed merger of ARMC into HMC would seem to be a proactive measure in avoidance of such a crisis.

To have an owner of ARMC that is capable and willing to make the capital infusions necessary to support the ARMC operations, would seem to be essential to the system's survival.

We stand at a crossroads with regards to the future of medical care in Abilene.

Please help us travel down a healthier path and approve the HMC purchase of ARMC.

I am willing to discuss these issues further and, in more detail, anytime at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Thomas Headstream MD
1650 Antilley Rd, suite 200
Abilene, Tx 79606
theadstream@abilenedc.com



cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Stan Lambert, Texas State Representative
547 Chestnut
Abilene, Texas 79602



1 Ave. N • P.O. Box 1117 • Haskell, Texas 79521
940.864.2621 phone • 940.864.5014 fax
HaskellMemorialHospital.com

August 10, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

My name is Chris Strickland and I am the Chief Executive Officer for Haskell Memorial Hospital District and Stamford Hospital District, both located approximately forty-five minutes north of Abilene. I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As the CEO of two regional hospital districts, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region. I believe that this acquisition will provide the citizens of the region with better continuity of care, more access to healthcare services, create overall better quality healthcare, and lower the general and relative costs that are associated directly and indirectly with healthcare.

Texas, much like the rest of the nation, is facing hard times when it comes to rural health and rural hospitals. Our communities are facing a crisis in which several hospitals have recently closed in the regional area. Fewer hospitals, rising costs, lower reimbursements, and a rising need for healthcare services within the population present us with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders including myself and many of my colleagues. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical healthcare providers for not only the local communities, but are utilized by the communities within the larger region for specialized and shared healthcare services.

Hendrick is our main tertiary care center and main referral source for specialty care and diagnostic services. Hendrick also serves as our main hospital in which we transfer patients that need critical or higher levels of care than we can provide at our own facilities.

Delivering loving care to all in our community: body, mind, and spirit with dignity and excellence.



1 Ave. N • P.O. Box 1117 • Haskell, Texas 79521
940.864.2621 phone • 940.864.5014 fax
HaskellMemorialHospital.com

Currently, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients and the surrounding hospitals that rely on their services. Our patients at our hospital may have to wait hours to be accepted as a patient to Hendrick, due to their lack of bed space or staffing, delaying treatment or critical care to patients. Because of this, we may have to transport patients to further away hospitals, again delaying critical care. It is in the best interest of the health and wellbeing of the entire Greater Abilene region, for Abilene Regional to join Hendrick Health System.

Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers. This is also advantageous for the recruitment of medical personnel and staff at my own facilities. The acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining doctors, mid-level providers, nurses, as well as ancillary and allied health care workers for the region. Enhance medical services, improved quality, and more access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost will be the result of this acquisition.

I have signed an affiliation agreement with Hendrick Health System for both hospital districts in which I am CEO. We have seen many short term and long term benefits in partnering with Hendrick through our affiliation that include specialty services that we did not have in the area, telemedicine services, recruitment help, and economies of scale in which we would not ordinarily have on our own. As our relationship grows with Hendrick, we are receiving support and guidance as well as plans on growth and shared services desperately needed by our local population. All of this is made more possible through the acquisition and resources brought by Abilene Regional.

I am a huge supporter of Hendrick because it is not-for-profit healthcare. A large part of my professional background includes for-profit medicine. I left for-profit medicine because I believe in people over profits. Hendrick has a tradition of providing long-standing charity care that for-profit systems simply do not do. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

As a CEO of rural healthcare hospitals and facilities, I work closely with the leadership at Hendrick. Hendrick has been a tremendous supporter of rural health and has helped the surrounding rural communities gain access to healthcare services that local hospitals could not afford to provide before Hendrick's help. Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local and rural communities give me comfort knowing that Hendrick's leadership will be working along with myself and regional leaders in making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

Delivering loving care to all in our community: body, mind, and spirit with dignity and excellence.



1 Ave. N • P.O. Box 1117 • Haskell, Texas 79521
940.864.2621 phone • 940.864.5014 fax
HaskellMemorialHospital.com

This acquisition will ensure that West Texans in the Big Country region who need healthcare services today can access the best quality care available, and put the region's healthcare on more stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Chris Strickland MBA, MHA
Chief Executive Officer
Haskell Memorial Hospital
Stamford Hospital District
940-864-2621 ext. 305
cstrickland@hmhhealth.org

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Delivering loving care to all in our community: body, mind, and spirit with dignity and excellence.

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 10:08 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hendrick Medical Center

-----Original Message-----

From: Carrie Karr [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 9:11 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick Medical Center

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Good evening,

I would like to take a moment to let you know that I am in favor of Hendrick Medical Center acquiring Abilene Regional Medical Center. For decades Hendrick has provided care to the Abilene community regardless of their ability to pay. They provide not only inpatient healthcare, but they also provide hospice services, rehab services, skilled nursing services, home health services and medication to residence of not only Abilene but also the surrounding communities. Abilene has continued to grow. Allowing more bed space to operate would greatly benefit this community as Hendrick often runs at near capacity and have to send their patients out to other providers in larger areas. They work closely with the surrounding county hospitals, and do their best to keep those patients as close to home as possible. Hendrick also works closely with many community partners such as the Abilene Community Clinic and Medical Care Mission. They are invested in the Abilene Community. In short Hendrick Health System is great for Abilene!!

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Carrie Karr

July 29, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As President and CEO of McMahon Surovik Suttle, P.C., I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of our community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

Commissioner

July 29, 2020

Page 2 of 2

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Paul L. Cannon

President and CEO

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

WYLIE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

6249 Buffalo Gap Road
Abilene, Texas 79606
(325) 692-4353

July 28, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

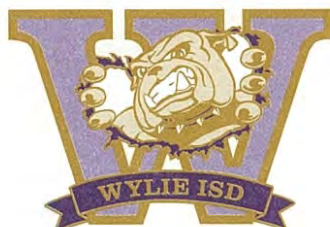
Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As superintendent of Wylie Independent School District, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region. Over sixty years ago, I was born at Hendrick and have had great respect for Hendrick ever since!

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

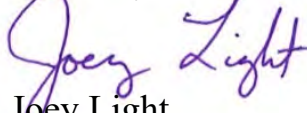


Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Joey Light

Wylie Independent School District
Superintendent

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



Cisco College

July 28, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Provost of Cisco College, I feel that this new relationship can be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the local area which they serve. Our college works very closely with both entities, and they are essential training sites for our health education programs. Cisco College offers several medical programs and both hospitals employ many of our graduates. We appreciate the close relationship that both have with the college as we all work together to train and upgrade the medical workforce.

While Abilene is a relatively well-populated city, we are surrounded by a spacious rural area that offers little health care. Hospitals are small and unable to offer specialized services that are often needed. There is literally a crisis in needs for health care in this part of our State. This proposal can help to alleviate some of the challenges that are currently apparent..

Hendrick Medical Center has a strong, stellar reputation for outstanding healthcare. It continues to grow and bring in additional specialists and services that are essential. However, there is a need to expand in order to meet the needs of additional patients. Joining Hendrick and Abilene Regional will increase the ability to serve more patients, and both hospitals will have access to specialized and high-acuity services. There will also be more opportunity to attract medical professionals.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-

Commissioner
July 28, 2020
Page 2

based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

Hendrick is committed to the greater Abilene community. As a citizen and educator, I feel that its local leadership will continue to make the best decisions concerning our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The Abilene area is supportive of the proposed acquisition as it will enhance the ability to grow health care services and attract personnel that will improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. Especially in this current health crisis, healthcare is at the forefront of our economy and our day to day lives. This opportunity offers potential for growth in our rural West Texas area and will contribute to building a stronger healthcare system.

Sincerely,



Carol S. Dupree, Ph.D.
Provost / CAO

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

LEGETT FOUNDATION

KICKAPOO SPRINGS FOUNDATION

P.O. BOX 176 · ABILENE, TEXAS 79604 · (325) 673-6429 · FAX: (325) 673-2028

July 23, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

It is my privilege to endorse without reservation the Hendrick Medical Center ("HMC") acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center ("ARMC") through the Certificate of Public Advantage presently being reviewed with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

For thirty-six years (1982-2018), I served as Executive Director and Board member of the Dodge Jones Foundation ("DJF") a principal philanthropic resource in Abilene over several decades. Further, I serve now in the same capacity with two of the DJF successor family foundations, being the Kickapoo Spring Foundation ("KSF") and The Legett Foundation ("TLF"). Each and every one of these foundations has been and will continue to be vitally interested in and financially supportive of HMC in all its benevolent health care endeavors. (DJF terminated December 31, 2018, distributing one half its assets aggregately to KSF and TLF).

In this suddenly volatile moment of unprecedented pandemic stress and unpredictable consequences for health care providers across the spectrum, efficiencies of operation and economy of scale seem paramount to render first rate care and maintain financial strength. This situation makes the HMC-ARMC affiliation even more compelling from a business and health care point of view.

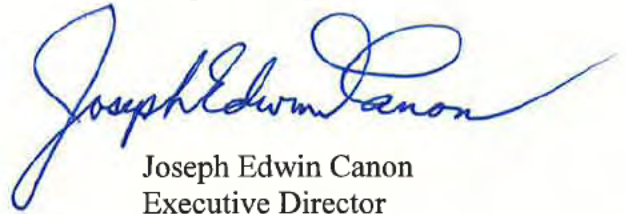
HMC is the pillar of health care services in this sparsely populated region of Texas. It has strength in its balance sheet and consistent cash flow, which complement and upgrade ARMC's more tenuous position. Conversely, ARMC is situated in a fast-growing area of Abilene, which complements HMC's less prominent location. In short, it is a win-win for both institutions, for the community of Abilene and for the entire West Central Texas region which is presently overstretched and underserved across its large swath of geography.

Finally, a word on the philanthropy of the foundations (which I represent) and our longstanding relationship with HMC. Because of the priority of healthcare at the pinnacle of quality of life in the culture, environment and ethos of a community, plus the not for profit status of HMC, our three foundations have enjoyed an incalculable synergy of philanthropy, joined with a first rate health care provider. Our esteem and respect for HMC as a true "first responder" for enhancement and preservation of life have been the catalysts for tens of millions of dollars in charitable grants from these foundations to HMC. We have considered Hendrick as our premier investment partner in the noble cause of philanthropy for healthcare. We could neither define nor construct a better investment for our foundation funding.

So, from our foundational perspective, the acquisition of ARMC by HMC is propitious and promising for the future of healthcare in the Big Country. We enthusiastically offer the strongest, most genuine endorsement for this deal. It is indeed the right opportunity at the right time.

We are all in.

Respectfully,



Joseph Edwin Canon
Executive Director

JEC/br

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

ABILENE AERO

325-677-2601

Fax 325-671-8018

Abilene Regional Airport

2850 Airport Blvd.

Abilene, Texas 79602



July 23, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As President of Abilene Aero, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

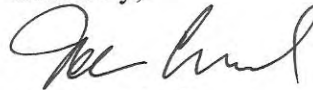
Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe Crawford", written in a cursive style.

Joe Crawford
President

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

July 23, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to enthusiastically support Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As the Manager of External Affairs and Customer Service at AEP Texas, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

The Abilene region has seen rural hospitals close even though many residents in the area are medically fragile. The challenge of delivering quality healthcare for our region has never been greater. Hendrick has met this need for many years but faces capacity issues that could be alleviated by this acquisition of Abilene Regional.

Hendrick, in addition to primary care, provides outstanding specialty care that is currently not available at Abilene Regional. This acquisition would allow patients of Abilene Regional the same level of care provided by Hendrick.

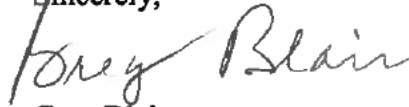
Hendrick is locally owned and controlled and has an outstanding reputation for supporting the community beyond providing excellent healthcare. This is a hospital that is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that west Texans who need competent and compassionate

Commissioner Wilson
July 23, 2020
Page 2

healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Blair". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" and last name "Blair" clearly distinguishable.

Greg Blair

Manager External Affairs and Customer Service

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Office of the President

206 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29100, Abilene, Texas 79699-9100
325-674-2412 • Fax 325-674-2958



July 22, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson

cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer

Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Brown-Heatly Building

4900 North Lamar Blvd.

Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

Hendrick Medical Center (HMC) is a vital part of the Abilene community, as well as surrounding areas. As president of Abilene Christian University (ACU), I am writing today to endorse HMC's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care -- fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

HMC, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, HMC faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. By joining HMC, Abilene Regional patients will have access to specialized and high-acuity services at HMC while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the greater Abilene area. Affiliation with HMC also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

For decades, the healthcare professionals, administrators and staff of HMC have provided the type of medical care that is vital to a growing, thriving community like Abilene. HMC's services to this community mean that universities like ACU, as well as local businesses, can continue to attract top talent to our organizations. Expanding HMC's capacity will strengthen our community in countless ways.

HMC is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

HMC's longstanding ties to the local community give me confidence knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe HMC and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

As a locally owned and controlled entity, HMC is vital to the students that study at ACU's School of Nursing, as well as to other clinical areas in our various allied health fields. I'm thankful for the great partnership that exists between HMC and ACU, and I look forward to that continued relationship for decades to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Schubert', with a stylized, elongated horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Phil Schubert, Ed.D.
President

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

School of Nursing

July 22, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Regional Dean of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC), I believe this would be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region. TTUHSC and Hendrick Medical Center have had many great years as we have partnered to meet the needs of the Abilene Community and surrounding counties. Our Texas Tech students, and later graduates have helped to provide access to quality healthcare. Our students are attracted to Abilene because of this and many of them end up staying in our wonderful community. We especially support the acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center because it is locally owned and controlled which therefore benefits the community. Abilene has always been unique in the fact that partnerships thrive in this community.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services. With this acquisition, those specialized services will remain in Abilene.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two

Commissioner
July 22, 2020
Page 2

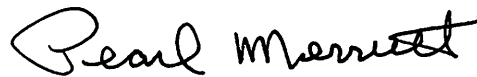
dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

This will be especially attractive to our Texas Tech students and professional faculty. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community. Hendrick has also long been known for its charitable efforts in the community which has been very beneficial.

It gives me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

This proposed acquisition will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow. It will help attract and retain skilled healthcare professionals in Abilene and improve quality access to healthcare. The community needs this acquisition which will make healthcare more affordable and stronger in Abilene.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pearl Merritt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small dot above the "i" in "Merritt".

Pearl Merritt, EdD, MS, MSN, RN, FAAN
Regional Dean and Professor

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



July 21, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson

cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer

Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,

Regulatory Services Division

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Brown-Heatly Building

4900 North Lamar Blvd.

Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing in support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Chairman of the Abilene Industrial Foundation Board of Directors, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like many other rural parts of the state, fewer hospitals, rising costs, and a shrinking population with significant health challenges contribute to a crisis in medical care. Expanding access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, as critical primary care providers for the local community, are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care but faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services currently offered by Hendrick, while increasing the ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. In addition, Abilene Regional would be better positioned to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing by virtue of the affiliation with Hendrick.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.



Having local people making decisions about our region's healthcare future, is something our community will appreciate and feel very comfortable with. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses, and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans in our part of the State, who need healthcare services today, can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Gary Grubbs, Chairman
Abilene Industrial Foundation

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:10 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Please Do Approve the Hendrick acquisition of Abilene regional

From: john reed [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 3:30 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Please Do Approve the Hendrick acquisition of Abilene regional

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison,

I received an anonymous mailing today as an Abilene resident asking that I contact you and ask that you do not approve Hendrick's acquisition/merger with Abilene Regional Medical Center. I assume you will be receiving more correspondence because of the letter.

However, I would ask you to do the opposite and approve the transaction.

I am not an employee nor am I connected in any way with Hendrick. Rather I am a retiree who has used both systems and I believe Hendrick to be a much better, more proficient provider of medical care.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

John Reed



Anthony Williams
Mayor

February 28, 2019

Senator Charles Perry
P. O. Box 12608 Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Perry:

This letter is to express interest and support for State Legislation to assure that decisions impacting healthcare in geographically isolated markets such as Taylor County, Texas, are made by Texas officials and not federal government agencies in Washington D.C.

It is our understanding that federal law provides that States can preempt certain federal control over some hospital affiliations/mergers if the State approves a Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA). For certain communities like ours that are surrounded by predominately rural areas this is important as rural hospitals in Texas have closed and the uninsured rate rises. Communities like ours are under increasing pressure to make essential care available to residents covering a 19 county area. It is also our understanding that important safeguards to consumers of health care will continue to be incorporated in State regulations and State oversight associated with this proposed legislation to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care which is affordable and cost effective.

The Texas State's Executive Branch through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission whose Commissioner is appointed by the Governor working in collaboration with the Texas Office of Attorney General can better decide what is best for unique communities like ours rather than federal government agencies not as familiar with the challenges of preserving rural health care in more remote areas of Texas.

For the reasons listed above, I believe the proposed COPA legislation to be beneficial to the community and provides more options to ensure high quality and cost effective healthcare is preserved in rural West Texas.

Sincerely,

Anthony Williams
Mayor



"RENTECH Boilers for people who know and care."[®]

2/27/2018

Senator Charles Perry
P. O. Box 12608 Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Perry:

This letter is to express interest and support for State Legislation to assure that decisions impacting healthcare in geographically isolated markets such as Taylor County, Texas, are made by Texas officials and not federal government agencies in Washington D.C. It is our understanding that federal law provides that States can preempt certain federal control over some hospital affiliations/mergers if the State approves a Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA). For certain communities like ours that are surrounded by predominately rural areas this is important as rural hospitals in Texas have closed and the uninsured rate rises. Communities like ours are under increasing pressure to make essential care available to residents covering a 19-county area. It is also our understanding that important safeguards to consumers of health care will continue to be incorporated in State regulations and State oversight associated with this proposed legislation to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care which is affordable and cost effective.

The Texas State's Executive Branch through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission whose Commissioner is appointed by the Governor working in collaboration with the Texas Office of Attorney General can better decide what is best for unique communities like ours rather than federal government agencies not as familiar with the challenges of preserving rural health care in more remote areas of Texas.

For the reasons listed above, I believe the proposed COPA legislation to be beneficial to the community and provides more options to ensure high quality and cost-effective healthcare is preserved in rural West Texas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jack Rentz". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "J" and a cursive "Rentz".

Jack Rentz
Chairman



Office of the President

February 28, 2019

Senator Charles Perry
P. O. Box 12608 Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Perry:

As the president of McMurry University in Abilene, Texas, I know the importance of quality health care for our 1,145 students and 200 employees. Most of our students and all of our employees come from Taylor County and the surrounding rural areas. Even the students who come from other more populated areas of Texas make Abilene their home for at least four years. One of the key elements of quality of life is having access to excellent health care. Thus, I support the approval of state legislation that assures that decisions affecting healthcare in geographically isolated markets such as Taylor County, Texas, are made by Texas officials and not federal government agencies in Washington D.C.

It is my understanding that federal law provides that States can preempt certain federal control over some hospital affiliations/mergers if the State approves a Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA). Communities like ours are under increasing pressure to make essential care available to residents covering a 19 county area. It is also my understanding that important safeguards to consumers of health care will continue to be incorporated in State regulations and State oversight associated with this proposed legislation. These regulations will ensure residents receive the highest quality of care, which is affordable and cost effective.

Most leadership principles emphasize the importance of having vital decisions made at a management level that is closest to the issue at hand. On issues as significant as the health of the community, it stands to reason that our state officials are in a better position to understand the challenges of preserving rural health care in remote areas of Texas than officials in Washington D.C. I have confidence that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, whose Commissioner is appointed by the Governor working in collaboration with the Texas Office of Attorney General, has a better grasp of this issue than individuals at federal government agencies.

For the reasons listed above, I believe the proposed COPA legislation will benefit our community and will provide more options to ensure that high quality and cost effective healthcare is preserved in rural West Texas. Therefore, I strongly support this legislation and appreciate your willingness to bring this forward to the legislature. Clearly, the public advantage to the Taylor County community and its surrounding areas would be enormous.

Sincerely,

Sandra S. Harper, PhD
President, McMurry University



February 26, 2019

Honorable Charles Perry
Texas Senator
P. O. Box 12608 Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Senator Perry:

This letter is to express interest and support for State Legislation to assure that decisions impacting healthcare in geographically isolated markets such as Taylor County, Texas, are made by Texas officials and not federal government agencies in Washington D.C. It is our understanding that federal law provides that States can preempt certain federal control over some hospital affiliations/mergers if the State approves a Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA). For certain communities like ours that are surrounded by predominately rural areas this is important as rural hospitals in Texas have closed and the uninsured rate rises. Communities like ours are under increasing pressure to make essential care available to residents covering a 19-county area. It is also our understanding that important safeguards to consumers of health care will continue to be incorporated in State regulations and State oversight associated with this proposed legislation to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care which is affordable and cost effective.

The Texas State's Executive Branch through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission whose Commissioner is appointed by the Governor working in collaboration with the Texas Office of Attorney General can better decide what is best for unique communities like ours rather than federal government agencies not as familiar with the challenges of preserving rural health care in more remote areas of Texas.

For the reasons listed above, I believe the proposed COPA legislation to be beneficial to the community and provides more options to ensure high quality and cost-effective healthcare is preserved in rural West Texas.

Sincerely,

Douglas Peters
President & CEO

FIRST FINANCIAL BANKSHARES

F. Scott Dueser
Chairman,
President and
Chief Executive Officer

February 26, 2019

Senator Charles Perry
P.O. Box 12608 Capitol Station
Austin TX 78711

Dear Senator Perry:

I am very concerned about rural healthcare. This letter is to express interest and support for State Legislation to assure that decisions impacting healthcare in geographically isolated markets such as Taylor County, Texas, are made by Texas officials and not federal government agencies in Washington D.C. It is our understanding that federal law provides that States can preempt certain federal control over some hospital affiliations/mergers, if the State approves a Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA). For certain communities like ours that are surrounded by predominately rural areas, this is important as rural hospitals in Texas have closed and the uninsured rate rises. Communities like ours are under increasing pressure to make essential care available to residents covering a 19-county area. It is also our understanding that important safeguards to consumers of health care will continue to be incorporated in State regulations and State oversight associated with this proposed legislation to ensure residents receive the highest quality of care, which is affordable and cost effective.

The Texas State's Executive Branch through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission whose Commissioner is appointed by the Governor working in collaboration with the Texas Office of Attorney General can better decide what is best for unique communities like ours. This is a much better solution than federal government agencies not as familiar with the challenges of preserving rural health care in more remote areas of Texas.

For the reasons listed above, I believe the proposed COPA legislation to be beneficial to the community and provides more options to ensure high quality and cost effective healthcare is preserved in rural West Texas.

Sincerely



Scott Dueser
Chairman, President
and Chief Executive Officer

FSD:cg



Stephens Memorial Hospital

Your Partners in HealthCARE

August 4, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

Please accept this letter as a vote of support for the acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As CFO and Interim CEO of Stephens Memorial Hospital District, I believe this is crucial to the continued provision of quality care to the citizens of Abilene and surrounding communities.

Stephens Memorial Hospital is a small struggling sole community hospital. Hendrick Medical Center is our first option for transfers for those patients needing a higher level of care than we can provide. The high acuity services Hendrick provides are not available at other close facilities.

Abilene Regional, while a fine hospital does not offer the high acuity services that Hendrick can provide. We have to frequently transfer high acuity patients to the Metroplex due to volume constraints at Hendrick. This causes a significant burden on our patients and families, many of whom are aged and uncomfortable traveling to the Metroplex to visit family members in a hospital.

We are a not for profit provider as is Hendrick. Having worked for large corporate owned facilities in the past, I can tell you that a locally governed, locally controlled healthcare facility will always deliver a higher standard of care to the patient, as decisions are not based on the next quarter's financial results.

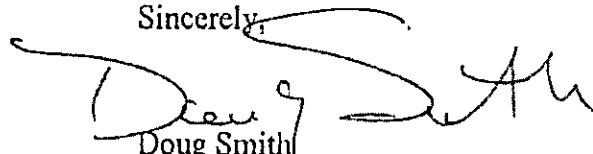
I encourage you to support the acquisition of Abilene Regional by Hendrick Medical Center.



Stephens Memorial Hospital

Your Partners in HealthCARE

Sincerely,



Doug Smith
CFO, Interim CEO

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals

July 23, 2020

Executive Commissioner Cecile Young
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heathly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Young:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. As president/CEO of TORCH, I believe this could be beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

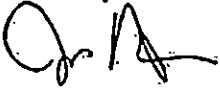
Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the Abilene area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick is an organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet patient need. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community. Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

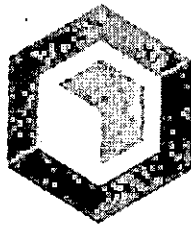
The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John Henderson', written in a cursive style.

John Henderson
President/CEO

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



DevelopAbilene

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF ABILENE

August 4, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson

cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division

Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

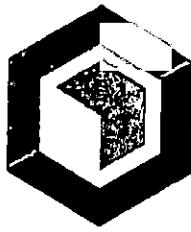
I am writing on behalf of the Development Corporation of Abilene and its Board of Directors to express our support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Chief Executive Officer of the Development Corporation of Abilene, I am a firm proponent of this acquisition, as it hosts an array of opportunities that could immensely benefit the Abilene community and the Big Country.

The need for expanded access to high-quality, specialized healthcare services has been a critical need in the Abilene community for quite some time, and a resolution is long overdue. Due to the scarcity of local hospitals and the rising costs of medical services, our residents are facing a significant healthcare crisis. Our region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers, but they are unable to meet the standards of quality healthcare our community so desperately needs.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care services, yet it faces capacity constraints that prevent expansion of service to meet the additional needs of our residents. If Abilene Regional could join Hendrick, more patients could receive access to specialized and high-acuity services, which would increase the healthcare system's ability to serve the primary and specialty medical needs of residents in the twenty-four counties that make up the Texas Midwest region.

Economically speaking, the creation and maintenance of an engaged, highly skilled workforce is critical to Abilene's economic success. Hendrick currently employs approximately 3,600 staff



DevelopAbilene

DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF ABILENE

members, and the proposed acquisition would enable Hendrick to recruit and retain talented medical professionals more aggressively. The ability to attract and retain skilled doctors, nurses, and other caregivers will enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare. In addition, increasing Abilene's higher-wage opportunities will boost prosperity and quality of life in our community through increased sales tax dollars that will be spent towards schools, businesses, and progressive, capital-generating activities.

Hendrick's commitment to providing not-for-profit, community-based healthcare, as well as its expansive charity efforts, are both reputable and recognized throughout the region. As an employer, Hendrick was selected by *Modern Healthcare* as one of the "2020 Best Places to Work in Healthcare", further reflecting their commitment to delivering high quality healthcare while emphasizing excellence and compassion to its patients.

We strongly believe that the proposed acquisition can effectively and efficiently deliver healthcare service throughout our community. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Misty Mayo
Chief Executive Officer
Development Corporation of Abilene

cc: Jack Rich, DCOA Board of Directors, President
Sam Vinson, DCOA Board of Directors, Vice President



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

July 21, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As City Manager of the City of Abilene, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

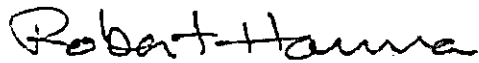
P.O. BOX 60 • 555 WALNUT STREET • ABILENE, TEXAS 79304-0060 • 325-676-6206

We work together to build a community of the highest quality for present and future generations.

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Hanna". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Robert Hanna
City Manager

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



Building a Healthy Community One Patient at a Time

Robbie Dewberry, CEO

August 3, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing on behalf of Mitchell County Hospital District to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As CEO of Mitchell County Hospital District, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community and the region.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

997 West Interstate Highway 20 - Colorado City, Texas 79512

Phone (325) 728-3431 Fax (325) 728-8974

www.mitchellcountyhospital.com



MITCHELL COUNTY HOSPITAL


Building a Healthy Community One Patient at a Time

Robbie Dewberry, CEO

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community and being a valued partner to the surrounding areas hospital's like Mitchell County Hospital give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,


Robbie Dewberry
CEO

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



July 31, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA), which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As Chief Executive Officer of the nonprofit Comanche County Medical Center (CCMC) and Comanche County Consolidated Hospital District (CCHD) health system, I strongly believe this acquisition would benefit the greater Abilene community, our own health care operations, and the Texas Midwest region. It would increase access to quality healthcare, maintain regional control from the long-established and well-regarded Hendrick health system, and lead to improved health outcomes for the many people in our region. Further, the acquisition would help attract and retain skilled doctors, nurses and other medical staff, enhance services, and through organizational efficiencies reduce the cost of care.

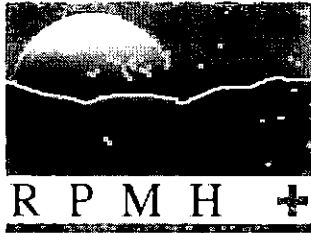
Hendrick Medical Center is a proven, mission-focused organization which many in our region look to for healthcare and economic leadership. The CCMC health system already benefits from Hendrick in important ways. We have a collaborative relationship with Hendrick which includes a robust patient and service referral system -- from our three primary care clinics and critical access hospital to Hendrick -- for services including specialists, swing bed care, and high-acuity medical transfers. In addition, CCMC and CCHD with Hendrick, share knowledge regularly around best practices and service opportunities for our area. This affiliation helps us achieve greater access to and quality of health care in our service areas. It is indeed a win-win relationship.

I have no doubt Hendrick's enduring relationship with local communities and health organizations such as ours combined with its ability to deliver effective and efficient services will help ensure a successful acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center.

Sincerely,

Dr. L. G. Troxell
Chief Executive Officer
ltroxell@comanchecmc.com

cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer, Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality, Regulatory Services Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission; Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr., Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General of Texas



Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital

200 E. Arizona Ave. • Sweetwater, TX 79556

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 690 • Sweetwater, TX 79556

Ph: 325-235-1701 • www.rpmh.net

August 11, 2020

Executive Commissioner Phil Wilson
cc: Victoria Ford, Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer
Kristi Jordan, Director, Health Care Quality,
Regulatory Services Division
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 North Lamar Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711-3247

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson:

I am writing to offer my support of Hendrick Medical Center's acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center through the Certificate of Public Advantage, which is currently under review with the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

As the Chief Executive Officer of Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital, I believe this could be very beneficial to the Abilene community, the South Plains region of West Texas, and Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital.

Like other rural parts of the state, our community is facing a crisis in medical care – fewer hospitals, rising costs and a shrinking population with significant health challenges. Expanded access to healthcare has long been a need in the area and a goal of community leaders. The region's remaining community hospitals, including Abilene Regional, are critical primary care providers for the local community, but are unable to offer many specialized and high-acuity services.

Hendrick, by contrast, is a premier healthcare organization that provides both primary care and extensive specialty care. But today, Hendrick faces capacity constraints preventing its expansion of service to meet the additional needs from patients. Joining Hendrick will provide Abilene Regional patients access to specialized and high-acuity services at Hendrick while increasing the health system's ability to serve the primary and specialty health needs of the two dozen counties that make up the Texas Midwest. Affiliation with Hendrick also better positions Abilene Regional to recruit and to retain talented medical providers the community otherwise risks losing.

Hendrick is committed to providing community-based, not-for-profit healthcare, and its long-standing charity care efforts are particularly meaningful. The expansion of Hendrick's faith-

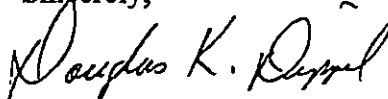
Commissioner
August 11, 2020
Page 2

based mission to a previously for-profit institution will benefit the physical and economic well-being of the community.

Hendrick's longstanding ties to the local community give me comfort knowing local people will be making decisions about our region's healthcare future. Hendrick has also shown tremendous support and assistance to ensure the success of Rolling Plains Memorial Hospital. I believe Hendrick and Abilene Regional can and will deliver effective and efficient healthcare service throughout our region, and expanding Hendrick's capacity will significantly reduce the occasions Hendrick will have to divert our acutely ill patients. When capacity forces diversion to facilities much further than Hendrick, the time to definitive care is greatly extended and the distance for our families is much further from home.

The proposed acquisition will contribute to attracting and retaining skilled doctors, nurses and other caregivers, enhance medical services, and improve quality access to healthcare at the lowest possible cost. This will ensure that Texans who need healthcare services today can access the best care available and put the region's healthcare on stable footing for tomorrow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas K. Dippel", written over a horizontal line.

Douglas K. Dippel
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Attorney General W. Kenneth Paxton Jr.
Jeff Mateer, First Assistant Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General of Texas
300 West 15th Street
Austin, TX 78701



September 29, 2020

Phil Wilson, Executive Commissioner
Texas Health and Human Services Commission
Brown-Heatly Building
4900 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Texas 78751-2316

BY EMAIL: healthfacilitylicensing@hhsc.state.tx.us

RE: Certificate of Public Advantage Application of Hendrick Health System

Dear Executive Commissioner Wilson,

On behalf of America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), we write to ask that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (the Commission) take all steps necessary to protect consumers from anticompetitive hospital consolidation in the state of Texas. AHIP is the national association that represents health insurance plans providing health and supplemental benefits to the American people through employer-sponsored coverage, the individual insurance market and the Exchanges, and public programs such as Medicare and Medicaid.

AHIP and its members have a strong interest in ensuring that consumers benefit from competitive provider markets. AHIP has previously expressed concern about anticompetitive hospital consolidation, noting the impact of such consolidation on the cost of care, the quality of services, and the pace of innovation.

While we do not have specific information about the acquisitions covered by the Hendrick Health System Certificate of Public Advantage (COPA), we note that others have expressed concern that the acquisitions will reduce competition and lead to consumer harm. Often, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) challenges transactions that lead to this result. One reason that parties therefore seek a COPA is to try to obtain "state action" antitrust immunity from the federal antitrust laws, and therefore preempt FTC review and challenge of the transaction.

While COPA schemes are adopted with the worthy goal of attempting to prevent, through regulation, harm to consumers from hospital mergers, it is impossible to provide the type of regulatory oversight that can fully substitute for competition. The FTC has consistently advised states that COPAs are both unnecessary to allow pro-competitive activities and instead are likely to lead to "increased health care costs and decreased access to health care services.

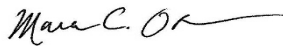
Furthermore, providing the type of active regulatory oversight necessary to maintain "state action" immunity is a significant cost for regulatory authorities. This, and other factors, raises the risk that the

protection for consumers through COPA regulatory oversight will be temporary, but the harm—of lost competition—will be permanent. And the harm to consumers from anticompetitive hospital consolidation is well documented and ongoing.

We respectfully suggest to the Commission that FTC guidance; the certainty of long-term harm and the uncertain scope and duration of regulatory protections; and the record of consumer harm from anticompetitive hospital consolidation should weigh significantly in its consideration. While a strong regulatory framework may mitigate some concerns, it is impossible for it to address the myriad ways in which a monopolist can exercise market power to the detriment of consumers. The best approach is to prevent anticompetitive mergers and preserve hospital competition.

We thank the Commission for the opportunity to submit these comments. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at mosman@ahip.org [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

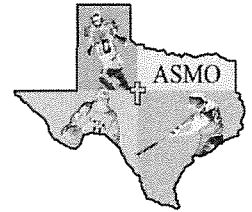
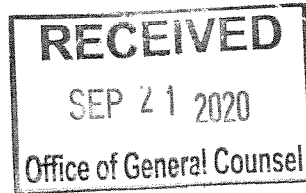
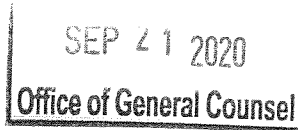


Mara Osman
Senior Regional Director

America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) is the national association whose members provide insurance coverage for health care and related services. Through these offerings, we improve and protect the health and financial security of consumers, families, businesses, communities and the nation. We are committed to market-based solutions and public-private partnerships that improve affordability, value, access and well-being for consumers. Visit www.ahip.org for more information.

DALE A. FUNK, MD
CLIFFORD L. DEPRANG, MD
SAMUEL S. MARONEY, DO
Abilene Sports Medicine & Orthopedics
2074 Antilley Rd. Abilene TX, 79606

Office: 325-698-3865
Fax: 325-793-1295
www.abilenesportsmed.com



September 16, 2020

Texas Health and Human Services Commission
ATTN: Mack Harrison
HHSC Office of Chief Counsel
PO Box 149347 – Mail Code 1919
Austin, TX 78714-9347

RE: Hendrick Medical Center Proposed Purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center

Dear Mr. Harrison,

We write you this letter to express our concerns as an independent physicians' as well as a concerned citizen of Abilene, Texas. We have discussed and given much thought to the proposed purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center (ARMC) by Hendrick Medical Center (HMC) and ask for your consideration when evaluating the impact this will have in the community.

First and foremost, we feel HMC is a great hospital and provides many services to the Abilene community. However, we feel that "Choice" of the community should always be at the forefront when medical services are needed. The people of Abilene should always have a choice where they elect to receive hospital and physician services. It is our inclination that with this purchase the likelihood of healthy competition will be dissolved and HMC will monopolize the market. With their current financial strength, they would squeeze out the "little" guy and force independent physicians to either leave their practice they worked so hard for and join HMC, or leave Abilene and try to establish a practice in another city.

The arguments against hospital mergers focus on consumer (patient) costs increasing when there is a lack of competition: when the same hospital system controls the majority of care in any given area, that system also controls what it charges for services when there is no other system to vie for patients. The reasoning is that more providers make for greater competition and therefore lower prices. There is evidence that greater concentration

in hospital markets leads to higher negotiated rates with insurers. It is understood that competition improves quality of care even when prices are market determined.

Mergers may affect delivery and availability of services as hospitals work toward greater efficiency in cost control. When efficiency becomes the goal, employees may become redundant, with staff layoffs a possibility. All these factors affect a community, either through lost jobs, lost revenue to local stores and businesses, travel for services that were once offered nearby, higher out-of-pocket costs, and possibly lower quality care. A service area monopoly puts a community at risk of no health care or limited access to care if the health system fails.

As an independent physician practice that has served the members of Abilene for over 20 years and over that time have worked at both hospitals find each hospital has its own unique niche in the market and gives members of the community and option to seek where they receive medical care.

It is our opinion that this merger would most likely adversely affect the community and ask for your expert evaluation and consideration in opposing the acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Health Systems.


Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dale A. Funk'.

Dale A. Funk, MD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clifford DePrang'.

Clifford DePrang, MD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Samuel Maroney'.

Samuel Maroney, DO

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Joe Nunn [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 4:38 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Abilene

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir,

We are very concerned with Hendrick Hospital purchasing Abilene Regional Hospital. We have had issues with doctors prescribing specific vendors and Hendrick choosing to use their own "preferred" vendors. With them purchasing ARH the situation will only become worse as they will have a monopoly in Abilene. Please do not allow this sale to be completed. Sincerely,

Joe and Barbara Nunn
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Mary wood [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 2:54 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: ARMC possible purchase

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir

I am totally against Hendricks purchasing Abilene Regional. It would destroy the city of Abilene, Texas.

- The City depends on the hospital to meet the budget.
 - Citizens need to be able to choose their health care.
 - A not for profit hospital can then dictate the price for care.
 - Hendricks does not like blue cross and will drop the contract as soon as they acquire the property.
 - They will have a monopoly on all business. No medical equipment or supplies, labs, express ER, ambulatory surgery and much more will be able To survive in Abilene unless they to become affiliated with Hendricks.
 - Citizens will be purchased also, or they will not receive the care they deserve.
- Please vote no. Do not let Hendricks purchase Abilene Regional.

Mary Wood-Stewart RN
Sent from my iPhone

Mack Harrison,

I am aware that Hendrick Medical Center is attempting to buy Abilene Regional Medical Center, thereby creating a healthcare monopoly in Abilene. As an anesthesia provider in Abilene, I would like to provide some insight. Allowing this monopoly will not benefit Abilene, but grievances are many.

1. This will completely eliminate healthcare choice for patients in Abilene, and the surrounding area forcing people to travel 200 miles for another choice.
2. This monopoly allows Hendrick medical center to exert control over healthcare providers in Abilene, allowing them to dictate salary, call schedules, even medical practice and referrals.
3. This monopoly will allow Hendrick to eliminate choice for both home health, and medical equipment. They will preferentially use Hendrick Home Health, and Hendrick Medical Supply by controlling referrals from Hendrick physicians.
4. This monopoly will allow Hendrick to control the local health care insurance options, and force consumers to purchase FIRSTCARE, which is owned by Hendrick Medical Center. This is not a new notion, they refused to take Blue Cross Blue Shield for over a year, and would not hesitate to do this again.
5. The tax burden of residents in the Wylie school district will increase.

No good can come from the creation of this malicious monopoly. I ask you to please reject this hospital takeover to protect the citizens of Abilene.

Sincerely,
Samuel Kyle Pendleton CRNA

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: gerald ford [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020 9:34 AM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Abilene health care

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr Harrison, I writing you to ask that the state not approve the acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center by The Hendricks consortium. I am an anesthetist at ARMC and have been at that facility since 1986. I moved to Abilene to work there, bought a house, raised 2 children here. We are long standing members of the community and are involved in many facets of Abilene mostly through our church.

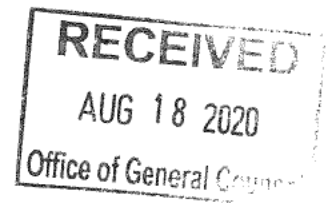
There are many health care providers who, by choice, don't work for HMC. There are many patients who would rather not, if given the choice, have there medical care done at HMC. If this acquisition is approved that choice is taken away. It is my understanding that a state law had to be recently changed - conveniently-for this to be possible. In my opinion and of many others this deal is a bad deal for Abilene. A reduction in competition for healthcare - or most other things- is usually bad for everyone except the monopolists.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter,
Gerald H. Ford

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

Robert W. Cockrell



August 8, 2020

Mr. Mack Harrison
HHSC Office of Chief Counsel
P O Box 149347 - Mail Code 1919
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

Dear Mr. Harrison:

This letter is written as a protest to the proposed purchase of Abilene Regional Center (ARMC) by Hendrick Medical Center (HMC). As a retired CPA who, many years ago, was part of the financial audit team I offer points to consider.

HMC should stand for Hendrick Marketing Center. HMC markets all aspects of medical services, however, it cannot deliver services efficiently; rather than providing fewer services effectively at the upmost. Also, HMC has a long history of the chronic "staph", regardless of measures to eradicate it.

The best medical services in the Abilene surrounding area is from services received from providers in the Metroplex (Fort Worth-Dallas) area.

For the best service, in any business, is to have competition. HMC's purchase of ARMC would result in no competition of medical services in Abilene. Abilene is the hub for the west central Texas area.
COMPETITION vs. MONOPLY IS ALWAYS BETTER.

I understand that ARMC's controlling home office is in financial trouble. Surely, the Metroplex medical organizations of Baylor or Texas Presbyterian entities or another could make a deal for ARMC.

NEGATIVE FINANCIAL & ECONMIC IMPACT

Should HMC prevail, it will wreck havoc on the City of Abilene, Taylor County and Wylie ISD. HMC is a increased property taxes for property owners, especially for Wylie ISD property owners.

Finally, consolidation of the two entities would result in many duplicate ARMC administrative positions being eliminated. ABILENE AND ITS CITIZENS CANNOT AFFORD THE STRESS OF LOSS JOBS.

HMC's PURCHASE OF ARMC IS NOT A POSITIVE IMPACT FOR ADVANCING AREA MEDICAL SERVICES OR LOCAL FINANCIAL & ECONMIC AFFECTS FOR THE COMMUNITY THAT THEY SERVE.

Sincerely, with Respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Cockrell".

Robert Cockrell

8-10-20

Mark Harrison

HHSC Office of Chief Counsel

PA Box 149347 - mail Code 1919

Austin, TX 78714-9347

RECEIVED

AUG 14 2020

Office of General Counsel

Dear Sir -

In regards to the Hendrick Medical
Center take over in Abilene, TX,
please reject the hospital take over.

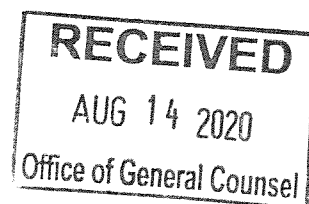
Thank you.

Sincerely -

Fred + Glenna Engle



Mack Harrison
HHSC Office of Chief Counsel
PO Box 149347 - Mail code 1919
Austin, TX 78714-9347



August 10th, 2020

I recently learned of the plan for Hendricks Hospital to take over Abilene Regional Hospital. I was given your contact as the person who is involved in giving government approval for this to happen. I previously had terrible experiences at Hendrick. I now go only to Abilene Regional and love it and have had a much better experience.

It would be devastating to me to allow Hendrick to take that hospital over. Choice in something as important as health care is very important. It is unamerican to take that away. The only way to have a choice in healthcare if this happens would be to drive over 2 hours to the metroplex. Please stop this if you can. I know Hendricks has a lot of money and powerful people, and individuals like me don't seem to really matter.

I have friends that also feel this way. We have a sense of dread about this. If that hospital is being sold, it should be sold to someone besides Hendrick so we can still have a choice. Please help our city will be ruined if this happens.

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Jeff Atchison [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 25, 2020 3:14 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Monopoly of health care in Abilene Tx

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

I am deeply concerned about the purchase of the Abilene Regional Hospital by Hendrick hospital of Abilene. If this is allowed there will be absolutely no choice for health care providers in the Abilene area. I believe competition is crucial for a free market system to work correctly. I have voted and fought against Obama-Care because it limited free choice for the consumer. I would think the state of Texas would do everything it could to encourage competition. It's the only way to ensure quality stays high and cost are minimalized.

Please do not allow this monopoly to take hold in Abilene!

Sincerely,

Jeff Atchison
Big Country Financial Services - owner

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Amber [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2020 6:16 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center Acquisition

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Hendrick has the majority of the market already and they have demonstrated the capacity to expand in order capture even more. They are entering new territory with medical malls, free standing emergency rooms, and outpatient surgery centers. Their physician network is growing, referring more and more services back into their own system. Not only are they stable, they are financially healthy enough to grow.

In light of the fact that the Hendrick Health System does not need any additional help, giving them a monopoly is irresponsible. The entire Wylie School District depends on the tax revenue generated by the for profit health network in the community. Creating a tax exemption would necessitate higher property taxes and drive home values down. Independent physicians depend on an alternative health system. Our community needs choice and competition in healthcare. Hundreds of licensed healthcare professionals deserve to have a choice in employers and work cultures.

Sincerely,
Amber Ponder DNAP, CRNA

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Peggy Renfro Ford [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 14, 2020 6:40 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Hendricks Medical Hospital, Abilene,Tx.

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

I am against this hospital take-over of Abilene Regional. Thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: Chuck Doby

[REDACTED] Sent:

Thursday, August 13, 2020 4:58 PM

To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)

<Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us> Subject: Hendrick
hospital purchase of Abilene Regional Hospital

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

This email is to voice my opposition to Hendrick Hospital's attempt to purchase the only other hospital in Abilene, Tx. Namely, Abilene /Regional Hospital.

This purchase if successful will create a virtual monopoly of hospital care in this city. The only means the public has to marginally keep a check on soaring hospital costs is the competition between the two local hospitals. Costs seem absurd already when the charges for an overnight stay can be nearly \$18,000. I know because I was there

2 nights 2 years ago for a minimal TIA. It makes little sense for the public to support this acquisition.

Sincerely,

Charles Doby

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2020 1:09 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: opposing purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendricks Medical Center.

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison,

I am reaching out to let you know that I as well as everyone I know is opposed to Hendricks acquiring Abilene Regional. If this acquisition moves forward it will only have a negative effect on the community. Not only will the residents have no choice in healthcare it will ultimately increase the price of healthcare with no competition with one system. Healthcare workers if they choose to stay in the field of healthcare are now going to be limited into their chose of employment. This will undoubtedly reducing the quality of care for the patients the hospital will be serving. This will also limit the number of talented people that may be drawn to Abilene because of the competition in our healthcare system, likely stopping the economic growth that Abilene has so needed. The tax burden on the citizens of Abilene would cause some of the people to seek residency elsewhere to avoid the increase in taxes this will cause. I always go back to the thought too big to fail--- Just think If Hendricks Health System acquires our only other healthcare option in a 200 mile radius and fails how devastating this could be for the community. Every system has its pros and cons and with the ever changing environment that is currently plaguing our everyday existence, I do not feel like it would be good for the community to let this happen.

Thank you for your time.

Administrator

Abilene Eye Institute

2

Cataract and Refractive

Surgery Center

325-695-2020

fax325-695-2326

2120 Antilley Road

Abilene Texas 79606

-----Original Message-----

From: Stanley Smith [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 3:28 PM

To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>

Subject: Hendrick Medical Center acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

I am opposed to such acquisition for several very important reasons. Abilene Regional is the largest taxpayer in the Wylie school district. Hendrick is a non-profit which if it takes over will cause a huge tax revenue loss to the Wylie area. My property tax will go up and my home value will decrease.

Healthcare choice will instantly be gone as Hendrick will be the only choice in town. Hendrick already functions in a near monopolistic manner. Independent pharmacies, home healthcare providers, home healthcare suppliers, physical therapist, hospice, physicians who are not a part of the Hendrick group and many others in related healthcare fields have a distinct disadvantage in competing against the nonprofit Hendrick system. Abilene has a hard time recruiting top specialized physicians. And the ones that do move here many times do not stay long because they either do not like being under the thumb of their Hendrick employer, or if independent, having to compete against the nonprofit Hendrick.

I am very concerned about the huge changes in healthcare in Abilene with the creation of a Hendrick monopoly and about rising taxes.

Please, Mr. Harrison, reject the hospital take over.

Sincerely,

2

Stanley M. Smith, D.D.S.

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: David Longley [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 10:26 AM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Taylor County Monopoly

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

As you know Hendrick Medical Center is in the process of buying Abilene Regional Medical Center in Abilene, Texas. This creates a monopoly for Taylor County as well as several surrounding counties.

Healthcare choice will be instantly gone in the Abilene area. For any person to have a different choice in healthcare, they will have to go over 100 miles for another choice.

In addition, Abilene Regional Medical Center pays taxes of 1.5 million per the local county tax office. This expense will have to be dispersed among the individuals and other businesses here in Taylor County and Texas.

Please consider rejecting this hospital takeover in Abilene.

Sincerely,
David W. Longley, DO
Staff physician at both HMC and ARMC

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 6:40 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Sir. I am requesting that you do not approve the purchasing of Abilene Regional Medical Center to Hendrick Medical Center, This would create a monopoly of our local healthcare. Our current two hospital choice gives us the opportunity to choose between the two hospitals as to which one suits our needs. Please do not allow a local healthcare monopoly in our area. This would cause an undue burden to travel a long distance in order to find another healthcare alternative. Thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

John Remisovsky
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Adams, Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Beverly Hunt [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 9:37 AM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Hendrick Hospital Monopoly in Abilene, TX

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mack, we're very concerned about the changes in healthcare in Abilene that would be created by a monopoly in healthcare if the merger of Hendrick Medical Center and Abilene Regional Medical Center is approved by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services Commission.

Please add two names to the "NO" side of this argument. We are residents of Abilene and deliberately chose to move to the south side due to the proximity of Abilene Regional and the fact that it was an independent entity from Hendrick. Our health care choices would be eliminated should Hendrick take over AMRC. We have limited income and are also concerned about the possibility of rising tax rates. Please reject the hospital take-over.

Bill and Beverly Hunt
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: sarah lee [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 10:20 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Subject: Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene, Texas

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Sent from my iPad. As a taxpayer in the Wylie School District of Abilene, Texas I am asking you to reject the hospital take over! Please consider our request when making your decision! Thank you, Sarah Miers

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 6:12 PM

To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)

<Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us> Subject: Hendrick purchase of Abilene Regional hospital

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

My name is Alan Davis. I urge you to not allow the purchase of Abilene Regional by Hendrick Medical Center. I am a resident of the Abilene Wylie School District. Abilene Regional is the largest taxpayer in the Wylie school district. It will put an undue hardship on all taxpayers in Wylie if the sale is approved. It will also take all medical choice away from Taylor and nearby counties due to the monopoly that it will create. About 15 years ago I was the CFO of a small doctor owned hospital in Abilene. Most of our owners performed surgery at Hendrick, Abilene Regional and West Texas Hospital, who employed around 75 people including me. Our owners negotiated a network contract with Blue Cross so that our surgeons could do all of their surgeries at our facility, instead of having to travel to Hendrick. As our CEO was about to sign the negotiated contract, Blue Cross withdrew it because Hendrick had threatened to leave the Blue Cross network if West Texas Hospital was given network pricing. Hendrick has their own insurance ownership of First Care. They threatened to encourage all Blue Cross insured companies to convert to First Care if West Texas Hospital was admitted as a network facility. Within months the hospital closed, partly due to the pressure put on Blue Cross by Hendrick, and all employees, including me lost their jobs. A merged Hendrick and Abilene Regional will make any "choice" of providers a joke. Thank you for your time and attention on this matter.

Adams, Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:17 AM
To: Jordan, Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene Regional Medical Center Sale

From: Katrina Pelleran [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 9:17 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center Sale

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

August 10, 2020

Mr. Mack Harrison
HHSC Office of Chief Counsel
PO Box 149347, MC 1919
Austin, TX 78714-9347

Mr. Harrison,

I am a fiscally conservative accountant, born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona, but now permanently living in Abilene, Texas. My family chose to move to Abilene because Texas is a part of the Great Southwest and Abilene reminds us of how Phoenix once used to be.

I am concerned with what I potentially consider may be an unwise transaction and harmful to my local community - the sale of Abilene Regional Medical Center (ARMC) to the Hendrick Healthcare System. Here are some of my objections to this merger:

- 1) Choice and competition are absolutely necessary in a free market to drive down costs. Once Hendrick absorbs ARMC, our choice in Abilene for a competing healthcare system will be gone. Hendrick will, more or less, be a monopoly in Abilene. My daughter works at ARMC and has listened to many patients lately tell her they will drive 200-300 miles for their medical needs before they use Hendrick network. Monopolies, in the long-term, NEVER benefit the consumer.
- 2) I've been informed that ARMC, being for-profit, is one of the largest property taxpayers in my area – the Wylie school district. Working for many non-profits over the years, I know that one of the benefits of being non-profit is being immune from property tax. Hendrick Healthcare System IS a non-profit. If my local school district loses revenue because of this merger, they will have to increase our property taxes, which are already extremely excessive in Texas. We left Phoenix in 2017. Our 2016 property tax on our 2400 s.f. home was \$1,300 per year or .54¢ per square ft. Our state withholding tax on our family income that same year was \$1,200 for a combined total of \$2,500. The property tax on our 3700 s.f. home in Abilene this year was \$6,500 or \$1.76 per square ft. So you see...there really is no benefit for families to move to Texas where there's no state income tax. The property taxes are so exorbitant that our family incurred a 160% increase over Arizona property and state withholding taxes combined! We're really not looking forward to a major

increase in our property taxes over the next few years, and, along with many other Abilene households, may have to consider moving from our “forever” home.

If ARMC feels they must sell, for whatever reason, can they look into other bids from competing “for-profit” Texas or national healthcare systems that would be interested and a better fit in our area?

I’m asking that the Texas Health and Human Services Commission do what is fiscally right for our Abilene community and reject the sale of Abilene Regional Medical Center to the Hendrick Healthcare System.

Thank you for your consideration,

Katrina Simpson-Pelleran



Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene

-----Original Message-----

From: Dottie Preston [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 8:12 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Medical Center. Patients need more than one option for healthcare, and this transaction will severely limit choices. Our community will suffer when the doctors we love find employment elsewhere and patients travel out of town in search of a new provider because the monopoly does not meet their needs. Community Health Systems, may indeed need to sell Abilene Regional, but please stop Hendrick and let another organization step up.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Preston

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene TX Hospitals

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 7:33 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene TX Hospitals

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison,
I am opposed to the purchase of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Medical Center. This transaction will severely limit patient's choice in healthcare. The result of this will increase healthcare costs and reduce quality of care. Citizens of Abilene will suffer. Please deny this take over.
Sincerely,
Kerry Preston
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Combining both Hospitals in Abilene

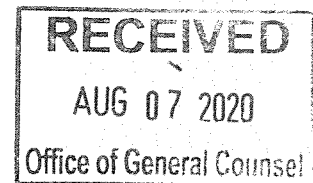
From: Sandra Daniel [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 4:15 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Combining both Hospitals in Abilene

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

We are concerned citizens and do not think that both hospitals should be in Hendrick Medical. We have had issues with Hendrick in the past and have changed to the doctors and hospital at Regional. If they are the same we would have to go to Fort Worth or somewhere else to get our medical. There would be no choices. It is the same as any other monopoly, not a good thing. This will upset the tax base and the taxes will go up and property values go down. This is not good for any of the citizens. Thank you for your time and hopefully for trying to see others viewpoints. Sandra and Freddie Daniel

Mr. Mac Harrison
HHS

August 2, 2020



I was asked by 8 different nurses at Abilene Regional Medical Center whom I work with to write to you so that our voices can be heard. I am afraid of retribution at my job so I am writing anonymously. Almost everyone who I have talked to from the janitors, to the CRNA's to the PA's all say the same things to me.

If the Hendrick take-over of Abilene Region Medical Center happens, it will be terrible for nurses and all employees. Currently, with 2 large hospital employers it provides competition and means that if the wages and working environment at one is not as desired, there is the option to go to the other. Other nurses that have left Hendrick for various reasons and are now at Abilene Regional are nervous. Nurses don't want to have to move away from Abilene to have a second choice in hospital practice.

Also, the nurses and employees at Hendrick will all take pay cuts because there is no other option in Abilene for them. They will have to move away or take the pay cuts. Taking away our only other employer option would be terrible and makes the nurses fearful about wages and working conditions as there would be no other option than to uproot families.

Please help us and curtail this merger. It is very bad for Abilene and will ruin the medical community and the city as a whole.

Sincerely,

The Nurses of Abilene Regional Medical Center
Abilene, TX

RECEIVED

AUG 07 2020

Office of General Counsel

Hello,

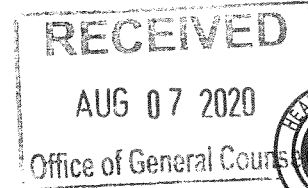
I am a resident of Abilene who is terrified by the prospect of Hendrick Medical Center taking over Abilene Regional. I discovered that you are the part of government that has to approve this type of thing. Please do not allow it.

I and many of my friends go exclusively to Abilene Regional because of bad experiences at Hendrick. Having the choice of going there gives us comfort. We will feel distress if our choice is taken away. We don't want to have to travel two and a half hours for surgery and hospital treatment. It would be a huge hardship for us. I am also afraid of my personal Internal Medicine doctor leaving when this happens. He said that he will leave if Hendrick takes over Abilene Regional Hospital. He said he had bad experiences with Hendrick in the past. I need my doctor to stay because he understands my complex medical issues.

Please don't allow our current choice to be taken away. Not all of us can travel easily that far for healthcare. The choice we now have is good for us here. Please don't take it away.



AUSTIN I. KING, M.D., F.A.C.S., P.A.
OTOLARYNGOLOGY
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY



2217 SOUTH DANVILLE DRIVE
ABILENE, TEXAS 79605

325-695-2270
FAX 325-695-3908

August 3, 2020

Texas Health and Human Services Commission
ATTN: Mack Harrison
HHSC Office of Chief Counsel
PO Box 149347 – Mail Code 1919
Austin, Texas 78714-9347

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I am writing concerning the proposed hospital purchase of ARMC and Brownwood Medical Center by Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene. I am disappointed that there was no call for a public hearing or other information regarding this possible acquisition. I am a long-term Abilene Physician and am quite concerned at this possible monopoly affecting a significant region of West Texas. I have actually been in practice in Abilene since the 1970's and part of my practice was when Hendrick Hospital was the sole hospital in Abilene. During that time despite frequent calls for modernization, the hospital remained an antiquated structure with a labor and delivery area that was the same as when I was born in that institution in 1948. A new locally investor owned hospital called West Texas Medical Center was then built and overnight Hendrick Hospital began to modernize. When Humana purchased the hospital and added Obstetrical services, then suddenly overnight the OB/GYN delivery area became very modern at Hendrick Medical Center.

As a member of the Texas Medical Association Board of Trustees for many years and finally as TMA President I followed multiple mergers of insurance companies and hospitals all over the state and except for those affecting rural hospitals, I fail to see any benefit of cost efficiencies related to increased scale of services. Certainly, any savings did not apply to either patient's or employees but seemed to go to increasing administrative bureaucracy. I am a firm believer that in most areas of our society including medicine that competition works. Because of this reason, I am definitely not in favor of this acquisition which I feel will lead to stagnation of services, termination of multiple employees, and difficulties practicing patient centered medicine.

Yours Truly,

Austin King, M.D.

AK/hdl

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:15 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Proposed Hendrick Medical Center takeover in Abilene

-----Original Message-----

From: Maureen Trotter [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 2:38 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Proposed Hendrick Medical Center takeover in Abilene

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a concerned Abilene-Wylie school district resident who opposes the takeover of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Medical Center. Abilene is large enough for two medical providers, and Abilenians definitely need a choice.

A health care monopoly has deleterious consequences for patients, patient pricing, and for physicians. Hendrick administration can be very autocratic. Having the additional patient beds come under the control of Hendrick Medical Center does not increase the number of patient beds in Abilene. It merely concentrates those beds in the hands of one corporate entity. Abilene Regional Medical Center is the largest taxpayer in the Wylie school district. They have been excellent corporate citizens.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sent from my iPad

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:14 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene Regional Medical Center takeover

From: Janice Middlebrooks [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 1:11 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center takeover

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

I am a taxpayer in the Wylie school district of Abilene, TX and I would like to state my **disapproval** of the pending sale of Abilene Regional Medical Center to Hendrick Medical Center. Please reject the hospital take-over.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Janice Middlebrooks
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:14 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene Regional Medical Center

From: Philip Underwood [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 8:49 AM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Mack, myself and many people I know, including those that work at Abilene Regional are strongly concerned about Hendrick buying Abilene Regional. This will create a Monopoly for healthcare here in Abilene. Not only is Abilene Regional a huge tax revenue contributor to the Wylie area, which my children attend, but we use them regularly. This loss of tax revenue will come back to me, as a tax payer and will further decrease property values because of the increased tax burden. Please put an end to this. We don't need one place controlling all hospital needs in this town. Thank you!

Philip Underwood
Lithia Toyota of Abilene



Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:13 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hendrick monopoly concern

From: Mark Aldriedge [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 8:16 AM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick monopoly concern

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

HHSC Office of Chief Counsel/ Mack Harrison

Mr. Harrison,

I live just a few blocks from Regional Medical Hospital in Abilene, Texas. I imagine by now you are well aware of the larger hospital in town, Hendrick, has a desire to take-over the only other hospital in town (Regional) and therefore provide only one, single, option for all the residents in Abilene (118,000+ citizens in the city alone). Hendrick is very aggressive in a number of ways, and controls their doctors and staff in a way not all hospitals do. You could do your own research in this if you wish. Those of us who have been to Hendrick for services and to Regional are concerned for the huge

changes that will take place if Hendrick is allowed to consume the one other hospital. Their monopoly would have a domino effect on the city from rising costs that could not be competed to rising taxes in the section of town that Regional sits in. I think if you study the huge benefits that Hendrick would get and then study the huge negatives the citizens would get, you will find this potential take-over would not be good for our city. Me and my wife are not for this buy out of Regional Medical!

Thank you for taking the time to study this,
Mark Aldriedge

Mark Aldriedge Custom Homes LLC

Adams, Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:13 AM
To: Jordan, Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center

From: Ronald Sipe [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 4:14 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison:

Please be advised that the loss of Abilene Regional Medical Center as an able competitor to Hendrick Medical Center will not be beneficial to the Community.

The original purpose, some 50 years ago, was to provide an alternative health care choice for the Abilene community. There is no question that the competition benefited the citizenry.

The tax contribution provided by Abilene Regional Medical is essential for the continued growth and development of the south half of Abilene. It also has been essential for the maintenance, and progress of the Wylie Public Schools system.

You are advised that both my wife and I do not wish to see Abilene Regional Medical Center become a part of Hendrick Medical Center.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald D. Sipe
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: HOSPITAL PLANS FOR ABILENE, TEXAS

From: Frances Roach [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 2:50 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: HOSPITAL PLANS FOR ABILENE, TEXAS

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison:

I am contacting you because I would like to ask you to use your influence to disapprove the takeover of Abilene Regional Hospital by the Hendrick Medical Center.

As a registered nurse with many years experience in and around both facilities, I believe it would be a disservice for our community to approve such a move. We that live in the Wylie community enjoy the fabulous school system that ARMC helps in part to facilitate through the taxes it pays. Furthermore, much like the national presidential election coming up, we like to be in a position to make choices for elected officials and our healthcare. With a takeover such as this, our healthcare choices would be gone, unless we choose to to out of town.

It is called freedom, sir, FREEDOM.

Please consider mine and the request of others when making your decision.

Sincerely,

Frances Roach

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hendrick

-----Original Message-----

From: Ray Templeton [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 12:43 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,
Hendrick's acquisition of Regional is bad in so many ways.
It creates a monopoly in the area.
It will cause BCBS to not service this area... just like they did when they got into a dispute with Hendricks last year.
It will cause a lot of doctors to leave the Abilene area.
Local taxes will go up.
There will be No choice in healthcare.
Scott and White had a valid offer for Regional but, rumor has it, there were some under the table dealings that stopped the deal.
There were also some funny political dealings that were done to classify Abilene , with a surrounding population of over 200,000, a rural city.
I can go on as an Abilene citizen of 60 years but I think you can understand my desire to see this merger stopped.

Ray Templeton
CFO
Chike & Next Level
[REDACTED]
Sent from iPhone

Adams, Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Jordan, Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hendrick Medical Center to purchase Abilene Regional

From: Liz Stitt [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 8, 2020 9:27 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick Medical Center to purchase Abilene Regional

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Mack Harrison

I am contacting you to let you know, that I am against Hendrick Medical Center purchasing Abilene Regional Medical Center.

I am opposed to Hendricks having a medical monopoly here in Abilene.

Thank you for your time,
Elizabeth S Ochoa
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:12 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hendrick medical center's attempt at securing a monopoly on health care in the Wylie area of Abilene, tx

From: Karla Garber [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 8, 2020 3:58 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick medical center's attempt at securing a monopoly on health care in the Wylie area of Abilene, tx

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

We are adamantly opposed to this monopoly takeover!

This would be detrimental to the tax base in the Wylie area

Monopolies NEVER have a good outcome

Please reject this hospital take-over

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Adams, Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:11 AM
To: Jordan, Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: I am opposed to the ARMC Acquisition by Hendrick Health System (Abilene, Texas)

From: Jonathon Ponder [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 11:25 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: I am opposed to the ARMC Acquisition by Hendrick Health System (Abilene, Texas)

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern:

HB3301 has empowered Hendrick Medical System to pursue a healthcare monopoly in my community. This will have dire consequences for my community by stifling competition, raising healthcare costs, impeding independent physician practice, and decimating tax revenue in the Wylie school district.

There is no justification to give an expanding non-profit hospital system that already has the lions' share of the market a legislative edge as well. Hendrick Health System already owns upwards of 80% of the market here in Abilene. In addition to dominating the market, they have already penetrated south Abilene (traditionally Abilene Regional's territory) with a medical plaza and have broken ground with another facility. Hendrick already has the competitive edge in the healthcare market and have demonstrated that they have the means to expand.

The thought of removing healthcare choice for a 200 mile radius is terrifying to me. There is no reason to remove FTC oversight here and allow "self-regulation". In fact, it's quite the contrary. In a town with a population of only 117,000, Hendrick Provider Network already owns 26 medical practices and contracts over 100 physicians/advanced practitioners. If this purchase is allowed to go forward, they will be the only game in town. Everything will be referred back into the Hendrick system where patients will be exposed to compounding facility fees and see their healthcare costs skyrocket. For example, my wife recently had routine lab work through the Hendrick Health System and had \$900 of out of pocket expenses (a 400-900% markup). Going forward, no independent physician will be able to maintain a referral base and hundreds of licensed professional healthcare workers lose the benefit of multiple employers competing for their services.

Lastly, as a non-profit entity, Hendrick's acquisition of Abilene Regional creates a tax exemption that costs the community dearly. Hundreds of households will see property taxes rise and their home values decrease, and the school district will face budgetary cuts.

This deal is unacceptable. No community should be forced to bare the consequences of being wholesale sold-out by their own state government. Hendrick will receive all the benefit of this deal, while our neighbors bare all the cost.

Sincerely,
Jonathon Ponder

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:11 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene Regional Medical Center Sale

-----Original Message-----

From: Chris Garner [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 6:53 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Regional Medical Center Sale

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

I strongly oppose the sale of Abilene Regional Medical Center to Hendrick Medical Center. We can not afford to have a monopoly in Abilene. My wife is a physician at ARMC and we would welcome the sale to Baylor Scott & White, who was in the running for the sale, or John Peter Smith/UNT, or another teaching research hospital branch, but Hendrick would devastate Abilenians choice for their healthcare. Thank you for you time. I really hope A&M comes back to the table.

Chris Garner
[REDACTED]

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:10 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Abilene Regional

From: Lisa Lemond [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 5:51 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Regional

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Harrison,

I am writing this letter in regards to Hendricks Hospital in Abilene purchasing Abilene Regional Medical Center.

I believe they are both good hospitals and one of the reasons that they are is due to competition. As we all know Competition is good in business and makes each company work harder to earn your business. Combining these hospitals

With one owner will end this resulting in the care probably being compromised. I sincerely hope you consider this and Stop this from going through. We in Abilene, like myself, that have been here our entire lives feel this would be best for All of us.

Thank you for your time,
Lisa Lemond

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Adams,Pamela (HHSC/DSHS)

From: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:10 AM
To: Jordan,Kristi D (HHSC); Fulkerson, Bret
Subject: FW: Hospital monopoly in Abilene

-----Original Message-----

From: RICHARD ROTHWELL [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 5:15 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hospital monopoly in Abilene

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

As introduction I am a physician in Abilene having practiced here for over 35 years. I am familiar with both Hendrick Medical and Abilene Regional having practiced at both. I have a litany of reasons this merger is a bad idea but will try to be brief. Hendrick is the town gorilla and regularly throws its weight around. We had a third boutique hospital in Abilene. It was owned by a group of physicians and was very nice to work in. Hendrick forced Blue Cross to drop them with political pressure and when they had an unfortunate death, Hendrick undermined their Medicare relationship and they were ultimately forced to close. Next Hendrick is portrayed as "non profit" yet they buy up properties at will and constantly expand their campus across the north side of town with these non profit dollars which avoid paying any property tax. As a matter personal experience, our housekeeper recently had an embedded IUD and needed surgical intervention. Her physician she was referred to from the public health clinic worked at Hendrick. She had no insurance but had saved and was going to pay cash. Hendrick wanted \$10,000 plus \$1200 for anesthesia and \$2500 for the surgeon for a D&C with tubal ligation with no options or discount for cash. She came to us in much distress. I contacted a friend and that physician charged her nothing and Abilene Regional, a for profit tax paying entity, charged her \$3500 with \$700 for anesthesia. She is now home and doing well. There are many physicians in town who will not work in a Hendrick facility because of the way they treat their staff and we will lose many very able caregivers if this merger goes forward. I know for a fact during the Covid crisis when physicians could not do elective surgery and were severely limited in seeing patients in their office, Hendrick drastically cut the salaries by as much as 75%. When they questioned the CEO of Hendrick his answer to them was, and I quote, " I can do anything I want because I own you". This is the attitude they have toward their staff. I know the owners of ARMC want to sell but Baylor Scott and White is also interested and would be a welcome addition whereas a Hendrick monopoly would be a travesty. I can document each of these facts and if you have any questions I am more than happy to expand on these and many more examples. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,
Richard Rothwell, M.D., FACOG

[REDACTED]

Mack Harrison
HHSC

July 1, 2020

Mr. Harrison, or whomever is reviewing the proposed hospital merger in Abilene, TX,

I am writing in regards to the proposed merger of Hendrick Medical Center with Abilene Regional Medical Center (currently owned by Community Health Systems based in Tennessee.) I was told that HHS is tasked with deciding if this merger will help or harm the community of Abilene, Texas. I am writing to tell you that this will indeed HARM a big majority of the community in four ways.

First, this merger WILL create a monopoly in our community for all of the people who live here and for the up to 300,000 people the hospitals draw from. This will increase prices and limit options for everyone in the community and it will make all people pay more for all healthcare. An example of this has already happened as Hendrick Medical Center got into a price war with Blue Cross Blue Shield a few years ago and patients with Blue Cross were not able to use Hendrick Medical Center for any of their healthcare because Hendrick wanted Blue Cross to pay more for their patient's services. Luckily at that time there was Abilene Regional Medical Center and the patients that had Blue Cross as their insurance carrier were able to use the competitor. This merger would give all power to Hendrick and they could strong arm all insurance companies into whatever they want to charge and increase costs to all people in the community. Also, they will most assuredly get into price wars with multiple carriers and cause Hendrick to drop insurance carriers and thus create a loss of choice for patients.

Second, it has been announced by the Hendrick administration that all doctors and employees of Abilene Regional will be required (if this merger is approved) to reapply to Hendrick Medical Center for privileges, and for all of their jobs very soon after the merger takes place. Hendrick has informed the Abilene Regional medical staff office that they will cancel the hospital privileges of ALL Abilene Regional Physicians in 6 months and make the physicians reapply for privileges under the Hendrick Medical Executive Committee. Abilene Regional doctors and Hendrick doctors have been in competition for 40 years. A committee of Hendrick doctors will then be able to destroy any of the Abilene Regional physician's practices and in some cases their career, by simply not renewing the Abilene Regional physician's privileges. To have your competitors given the power to unilaterally put you out of business and run you out of town with no or flimsy oversight is appalling. It is unamerican to have a star chamber comprised of your competitors suddenly able to destroy a life's work. THIS IS UNFAIR AND WILL HARM THE COMMUNITY, MANY JOBS WILL DISSAPPEAR IN THE NAME OF POLITICS AND ELIMINATION OF COMPETITION.

Third, many physician's offices are owned by Abilene Regional Medical Center as rental contracts. Hendrick will have the power to kick the physicians out of their offices by opting out of the leases. This will also be a way that Hendrick merging with Abilene Regional will HARM this community as physicians are driven out of their offices that Hendrick will now own.

Fourth, Hendrick is a non-profit entity and Abilene Regional is a for profit entity. Abilene regional Medical Center is the largest taxpayer in the Wylie School District. This merger would increase many property taxes for all of the Wylie School District. The home values of thousands of people would be affected. This community has no idea that this will happen. There have been no news reports to the community that their property taxes will be greatly increased.

The main way for all of this damage to the community to be averted is for HHS to NOT approve this merger. ANY other entity such as Scott and White or other hospital entity could purchase Abilene Regional and all of these issues with eliminating competition would not come to fruition.

The Texas House bill 3301 that was passed states,

the likely benefits resulting from the

proposed merger agreement described by Paragraph (A) outweigh any

disadvantages attributable to a reduction in competition that may

result from the proposed merger;

The disadvantages that I have explained completely outweigh the benefits of this merger. Please consider these points as you look at this possible merger. This will harm the community of Abilene, Texas in many ways. Monopolies are never good for anyone except the giant entity that it creates.

Abilene Regional Hospital is profitable and the current physicians and employees are a big reason why (Abilene Regional is the flagship hospital of CHS and is technically not even for sale – this merger is all about power and control of the entire medical market in Abilene, Texas.) Abilene Regional physicians and employees do not deserve to be at the mercy of the Hendrick Medical Executive Committee or the Hendrick administration's way of clearing out the competition. If you are immune to these arguments and refuse to stop this merger, the minimum amount of help that the Abilene Regional physicians and employees deserve is for the current privileges, employment contracts, and rental contracts to stay in force for at least 4 years. This would give the physicians and employees of Abilene Regional Hospital a fighting chance to prove their worth to Hendrick Medical Center.

If you sadly allow the merger, Hendrick should be contractually obligated at a minimum by the state government to:

1. Be required to continue to maintain full hospital privileges for all current active Abilene Regional physicians for 4 years after the merger.
2. Not be allowed to opt out or cancel any physician office leases for 4 years after the merger.
3. Not fire employees of Abilene Regional Medical Center without cause, or without representation of previous administration.

Sincerely,

The MANY physicians and employees of Abilene Regional Medical Center

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 8:05 PM
To: Harrison,Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Abilene Regional Medical Center
Attachments: Abilene Regional Medical Center

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Please do not make our town a one choice medical place where we will have to travel a great distance for a second medical facility opinion.

HHSC Health Care Regulation Policy Rules and Training

From: Brittany Gilmore [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 1, 2020 12:44 PM
To: HHSC Health Care Regulation Policy Rules and Training
Subject: proposed rule 20r041

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

To whom it may concern:

I do not support the merging of Hendrick Health Systems with CHS Abilene Regional Medical Center. I do not believe it will positively impact our community. It has already negatively impacted hundreds of lives. Co workers are already losing jobs, being demoted to jobs they were not originally hired to do. They have already started changing things within our system to prepare for the merger. Wages will decrease. Positions are being lost. Housing taxes will increase. Choice of care will be eliminated. Access to care will diminished and those that do not have transportation or funds to travel to another hospital will be left with no choices. Autonomy of choice and care will be eliminated. Decreased community choices for employment and competition between employers for nursing, physicians, therapists, social work will be depleted. Dynamics in the community will change and businesses will suffer with this merger.

concerned employee and citizen

From: [Harrison, Mack \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#)
To: [Jordan, Kristi D \(HHSC\)](#); [Fulkerson, Bret](#)
Subject: FW: Abilene Hospital Take-Over
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:12:59 AM

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 10:02 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene Hospital Take-Over

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison,

I am a concerned resident and practicing physician in Abilene Texas. The Texas Dept. of HHSC is evaluating the possible approval for Hendrick Medical Center to purchase our only other medical center/hospital for 150 miles. This would create a monopoly for Hendrick Hospital and would take away our communities' current choice in medical care and options. I live down the road and practice at Abilene Regional Medical Center and am not in favor of this takeover.

This affects me as a physician, resident and patient. I am writing this email to implore you to Reject this proposal and do not allow Hendrick to gain monopoly market power in our community.

Thank You for your consideration and time

Clifford

Clifford L. DePrang, MD, PA
Abilene Sports Medicine & Orthopaedics
2074 Antilley Road, Abilene, TX 79606
[REDACTED]

This message and any attachments may contain information that is privileged, confidential or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you have received this message in error, please send a reply message immediately and delete the message and any attachments without opening the attachments. Any further dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited.
Thank you.

From: [Harrison, Mack \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#)
To: [Jordan, Kristi D \(HHSC\)](#); [Fulkerson, Bret](#)
Subject: FW: Hendrick/Abilene Regional
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 8:11:36 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: John Walton [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, August 8, 2020 12:35 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Hendrick/Abilene Regional

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Harrison,

We were in receipt of your letter dated August 4th, 2020 regarding the acquisition of Abilene Regional Medical Center by Hendrick Healthcare. I was am aware that Hendrick is a non-profit healthcare system and also that ARMC is a for profit company and pays taxes in the Wylie school district. My wife and I also reside in the Wylie district and I can tell you because of many years of living here, the taxes are enormous and continue to rise. My first thought when I heard of this is how are we going to make up for the revenue shortfall? The only way is through increased tax rates on an already very high property taxed system. Additionally though, I think they could also actually raise appraised values of our homes thereby creating a 1-2 punch to generate more revenue to fill the gap. Either way, this is not a good situation for the tax paying property owners in this area. I do not know the financial stability of ARMC or what promoted ARMC to be motivated to sell to Hendrick but no doubt, there are issues involved that I'm not completely privy to.

In the end though, this is where we are and I am not sure many people are aware of the non profit aspect of Hendrick and how that will directly affect us. At a time when the price of crude oil has been at historic lows, it deeply affects businesses and individuals in this part of the country. Add the incredibly ignorant shut down of our country's economy and people in fact going bankrupt now, this is not the time to squeeze our dollars even more especially at a time when we are fighting for our lives and livelihoods even more.

I do wish there would have been formal hearings on this matter prior to now and whether or not this was planned and timed to coincide with the Covid issues, I don't know. I do know though we are where we are and this must be dealt with at a time where very few voices are being heard. I think our country is in the beginning of a huge contraction or correction in most all phases of business and personal lives. This is one aspect of an overall very pessimistic future for a while if not forever. I just think this issue, especially at this time, needs to be vetted through and through before the process moves forward any more and I appreciate you taking the effort to educate the people of the Wylie school district.

Sincerely,

John Walton

From: [Jordan, Kristi D \(HHSC\)](#)
To: [Adams, Pamela \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#); [Peers, Lisa \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#)
Cc: [Turner, Rachel \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#); [Ashworth-Mazerolle, Rachel \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#); [Harrison, Mack \(HHSC/DSHS\)](#)
Subject: FW: Abilene regional sale
Date: Thursday, September 3, 2020 5:06:19 PM

From: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS)
Sent: Thursday, September 3, 2020 4:32 PM
To: Jordan, Kristi D (HHSC) <kristi.jordan@hhsc.state.tx.us>; Fulkerson, Bret <Bret.Fulkerson@oag.texas.gov>
Subject: FW: Abilene regional sale

One more comment.

From: Kym Martin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 8:21 PM
To: Harrison, Mack (HHSC/DSHS) <Mack.Harrison@hhsc.state.tx.us>
Subject: Abilene regional sale

WARNING: This email is from outside the HHS system. Do not click on links or attachments unless you expect them from the sender and know the content is safe.

Is this true about Hendricks not paying taxes in Wylie school district in Abilene if the sale goes through?

Thanks, Kym martin

--

Thanks,
Kym