



News Release

Sale of Empire Health Services

Methodist Conference Joins Community in Asking for Protections

Spokane, WA -- The proposed sale of non-profit Deaconess and Valley Medical Centers to Community Health Systems, a for-profit hospital chain, is of interest and concern to many in Spokane and around the state of Washington. The community has formed the Protect Our Hospitals Coalition to unify those voices of concern, to provide community education about the sale and to facilitate public participation in the review processes that will culminate in public hearings June 25 and 26 in Spokane and Spokane Valley. The coalition stands at over 30 member institutions and is reflective of the broad range of concerns the community has about the proposed sale.

POHC is supporting the sale of Empire Health Services as the only reasonable option at this time. The coalition will be submitting comments based on concerns regarding cost, quality and access stemming from a thorough review of nearly 8,500 pages filed as part of the conversion process. Accompanying these comments will be suggestions on how regulators may strengthen protections for patients, health care workers and the public interest.

The Methodist Conference issued a letter today calling for conditions to be applied to the sale that protect coverage of the uninsured, requires CHS to continue support for local organizations such as Project Access and Wellness Works and calling for the public interest to be the primary consideration in the creation of a foundation. The Protect Our Hospitals Coalition is proud to be joined by Bishop Paup in supporting the sale with due protections for our community.

The coalition's goal is to end the sale process with two financially healthy hospitals systems in Spokane that continue to operate in the public interest, support the local health care economy and engage as positive community partners. POHC encourages all members of the Spokane and surrounding communities to attend the public hearings and have their opinions considered in the review process.