

May 1, 2012

Dear CON Team:

Please know that the decision you are about to make (again) is one of the most critical health care decisions facing the long-term health care future of Western North Carolina. Thank you the critical role that you play and for your ability to defend existing providers against unnecessary duplication of services.

Mission Health System shockingly has suggested that the small town of Fletcher, NC needs a new health care campus with nearly 500 parking spaces. There are many towns like Fletcher in WNC that have no outpatient health services and the residents have to travel considerable distances for care, yet Mission is proposing to duplicate services right next to their closest competitor, Park Ridge Health.

Each year Park Ridge provides critical services to many of the underserved in our community. Our 40-bed Behavioral Health inpatient unit serves many from across the region and it is a service that we typically lose money on. We are able to meet this tremendous need due to the profitable outpatient services we provide like Endoscopy.

It is no surprise that Mission is proposing to only bring profitable services into our community, all services that Park Ridge currently provides and services that have ample capacity at both Park Ridge Health and Pardee Hospital, the two main health care providers in Henderson County.

Mission has even had the audacity to suggest building a free standing ER at this location, just 4 miles from Park Ridge's ER. There are so many communities that lack emergency services, it is a gross act of aggression by Mission to propose building an ER so close to an existing provider. They know that nearly 60% of Park Ridge's inpatient business comes from their ER and that much of their business comes from the north. They realize that Park Ridge would have to ask patients to drive past one ER to come to their ER to continue to maintain the volumes they have that keeps Park Ridge able to employ the 1,200-team members that rely on Park Ridge for employment.

Mission operates under a Certificate of Public Advantage that guarantees protections to smaller community hospitals in turn for the 92% market share they were granted when they eliminated their competition in Buncombe County. This project is completely against the promises made in the COPA document.

As the last rejection of the CON team revealed, it is impossible for Mission to show additional need for Endoscopy in Northern Henderson and Southern Buncombe Counties. Park Ridge has ample capacity, Pardee's volumes continue to aggressively decline leaving extreme capacity, and Carolina Mountain has ample capacity. Introducing yet another provider in the area will likely further lead to greater harm to existing providers as we all are struggling for the limited patients now in this market.

While the current application before the CON team deals with Endoscopy, I believe the team must understand the real motive behind Mission's aggression against Park Ridge Health. This application is just the first step towards duplicating the very community health services that Park Ridge has been providing in Fletcher, NC for the past 102 years.

Park Ridge Health has the top patient satisfaction scores in the region for 2012. They have worked incredibly hard as a care team to earn the respect of our region and now lead the way in patient experience. Park Ridge earned a 98<sup>th</sup> percentile in overall patient satisfaction in the first quarter of 2012 and a 97<sup>th</sup> percentile in willingness to recommend. They lead 97% of hospitals in the country on public perception of the services performed by our caregivers.

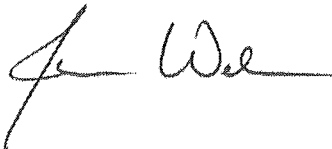
Park Ridge has always met the needs of the area and they will continue to invest all profits in local care for our community. In 2009, Park Ridge invested \$27 million dollars in a new outpatient surgery center and women's health center.

There is no health care organization moving into downtown Asheville or proposing to build a massive health care campus with 500 parking spaces just 4 miles from Mission. It is just Mission that is attacking the smaller community hospitals in the region. Their mantra seems to have been, "*join us or we will destroy you.*"

Thank you for listening to the evidence, for reading through the original denial of their application to move Endoscopy from their downtown location into the Park Ridge neighborhood, and for understanding the entire scope of this complete proposed duplication of services.

Our health care environment is very fragile in WNC and we need the oversight and firm support from those outside the shadow of Mission to help keep them from destroying any more care providers in the region and further limiting choice for our residents.

Thank you!



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