



Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP Branch #5376
PO BOX 560786
Charlotte, NC 28256

September 24, 2023

Dr. Sandra Greene
North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council
2704 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2704

Dear Dr. Greene,

In first hearing of the Heart'n Soul Hospice of the Carolinas petition for a special needs petition, I was immediately energized that an organization is providing aid for Mecklenburg County and North Carolina for health equity. In discussing the organization and its impact in neighboring states, I see so much potential for relief of minorities and marginalized people in my community. It has been my mission, to learn of the limitations that exist in the system that I have dedicated my life to addressing and enhancing for not only blacks but impacting all people of color. Heart'n Soul is the only minority-owned and operated hospice agency in North Carolina, out of over 200 hospice agencies in operation in the state. This is part of the problem with providing equitable care and service to all people who need these services.

Heart'n Soul Hospice of the Carolinas commitment to underserved and marginalized communities is a necessary addition to the state and echoes the Association for Home and Hospice Care (AHHC) commitment to health equity and inclusion. The Association for Home and Hospice Care of North Carolina acknowledges health disparities amongst minorities and marginalized communities that exist on a national scale. As a steward of the community and advocate for quality health care, we are in strong support of the organizations passion towards being a resource the county and state may rely on for increased utilization of marginalized communities.

Heart'n Soul Hospice of the Carolinas has demonstrated hospice excellence in several states, prior to operating in North Carolina; Tennessee and Washington. As we reviewed the strides amongst their target audience, there were noticeable points of increased utilization that can be attributed to Heart'n Soul Hospice's entry into the market. With HNS focus on rural health and starting county of Mecklenburg County, demonstrates the due diligence into communities of impact that would serve as a shift in the perception of resources and subsequent rates of usage amongst those communities.

To echo the National AHHC Interim CEO and COO, Ben Marcantonio:

"We know about 50% of all Medicare beneficiaries who are eligible for hospice care receive it. But that means that there are still 50% that are not, and we want to make sure that we continue to facilitate and advocate for that kind of access to care — especially among underserved communities such as people of color and LGBTQ+ communities. That's a key priority."

In high regards, President of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) – Mecklenburg Chapter.

Reverend Corine Mack