

From: louise Regelin [<mailto:regelinl@genesee-id.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, October 26, 2016 5:00 PM

To: regelinl@genesee-id.com

Cc: Carter, Janet

Subject: Fw: St. Joe's Hospital Ownership Sale

Importance: High

Mr. Lawrence Wasden, Esq.
Office of the Attorney General
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janet.carter@ag.idaho.gov

26 October 2016

Re: Purchase of St. Joseph's Hospital, Lewiston

Dear Lawrence:

Based on media information, your office is considering the potential acquisition of St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center by RCCH Health Care Partners prior to rendering a legal opinion. The basis of my concern is not the purchase price or management abilities of RCCH., It's far more basic. It is my hope that you (and your staff) will give serious consideration to both financial and other factors.

Ascension acquired St. Joe's in 2002 at no cost. Since then and now, there have been some issues and concerns raised. For example, St. Joe's is the only medical facility in our area that provides secure psych facilities. If law enforcement needs to '*confine*' someone for mental (danger to self or others) reasons, it's the only game in town. And, there is significant costs to our tax payers. The same is true for secure drug related patients - whether voluntary or involuntary. This may, or may not, be at tax payers and/or insurers expense. It is also our region's major trauma and cardiac facility. The next closest facilities are Boise, Spokane and Couer d'Alene. Hospitals in Moscow, Pullman, Clarkston, Orofino, Grangeville, Pomeroy and Cottonwood all regard St. Joe's as an essential resource. All of them are non-profit, not for profit or hospital district facilities. Ascension is also a non-profit facility. RCCH is NOT - that does NOT bode well for the needs and uses of hospitals and patients other than RCCH.

If RCCH is allowed to '*purchase*' St. Joe's from Ascension, who gets the money? Ascension did not '*buy*' St. Joe's - it was transferred from one non-profit to another in 2002. How would (or could) these funds be used to benefit local people and entities? Or, would they be directed to some other entity or purpose? How effective/restrictive would be the uses of those funds? How would/could patients and tax payers benefit? Who would audit and verify expenditures?

North Central Idaho needs a strong, large, comprehensive medical center to serve as a resource for local, smaller medical facilities. Hospitals in Orofino and Pomeroy need access to services not fiscally or physically possible to be provided in counties with minimal population (Clearwater: 14,000, Garfield 8,000). St. Joe's has been this resource for decades and it's still needed.

In addition, there is a great deal of cooperation and collaboration between various offices, facilities, practitioners, etc. in an effort to provide affordable and competent services to people in our area. What would be the impact of a for profit entity such as RCCH on those relationships? Would/Could RCCH end, change, prohibit, control those relationships? Would costs increase making use by other hospitals, clinics, practices cost-prohibitive resulting in services not being available or provided to those in need?

Another major concern is medical care for the indigent. As a for profit business, RCCH can/may refuse to accept transfers, do admittances and/or provide care to those who are not insured or may not be able to pay. At present, that is not the case and our local hospitals '*write off*' hundreds of thousands of dollars in '*charity care*' each year. It could be probative if your people could determine some accurate figures AND ascertain what RCCH's policies would be in those areas. In Idaho, with our current '*indigent care*' situation in the counties and demands on the '*Cat Fund*' at the state level, this should be considered a major factor in your decision making process. When one trauma case can '*cost*' a hundred thousand dollars, this can be a major concern for the patient, the tax payers, and our state budget.

Please understand, I am writing this as a concerned individual - one who has a deep and abiding concern about the costs and availability of health care to all Idahoans. I have been impressed by your (and your Asst.

AGs) performance over the past years. While not *'advising'* you to *'veto'* the sale of St. Joe's to RCCH, I sincerely hope that you (and your people) will approach the matter with considerable skepticism and painstaking thoroughness. May I also suggest multiple opportunities for *'public input'* from both concerned citizens and medical facilities/professionals in our area.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope to see you the next time you make a 'trip north' – perhaps for the North Idaho Chambers of Commerce Legislative Tour November 13-15? I understand the Governor plans to attend. Perhaps I'll see you at the Governor's Banquet on Monday night?

Sincerely,

/s/ **Louise Regelin**

Louise Regelin

Moscow, Idaho 83843

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Note: Excellent *'essay'* on HJR 5. Hope lots of people read it. I agree with your arguments and will vote **'No'** on November 8.