



Legislation Text

File #: RES 20-278, **Version:** 1

Committing to maintaining health care services at St. Joseph's and Bethesda Hospitals and requesting transparency from the M Health Fairview Board of Directors and CEO.

WHEREAS the Saint Paul City Council is dedicated to improving the health and well-being, both physical and mental, of the community, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic status or genetic information; and

WHEREAS M Health Fairview identified mental health well-being and access to health care as the two of the most important needs of the community served by Bethesda and St. Joseph's Hospitals in its 2018 Community Health Needs Assessment; and

WHEREAS St. Joseph's Hospital in downtown has served the needs of the community and the state of Minnesota for more than 150 years, serving over 12,000 patients annually and providing over 100 inpatient mental health beds to the community; and

WHEREAS 35% of patients at St. Joseph's Hospital are on Medicare and Medicaid, 77% for mental health patients, and 10% of patients admitted to the Emergency Department are homeless; and

WHEREAS St. Joseph's and Bethesda Hospitals serve a diverse community where 50.2% of the residents are non-white; and

WHEREAS life expectancy for community members living in the Saint Paul Neighborhoods of Rondo, Frogtown, and Downtown is over five years shorter than those living in the surrounding suburbs; and

WHEREAS rates of optimal care for Black and African American patients fall significantly below the state average in 8 of 9 routinely measured categories, including all categories for depression outcomes; and

WHEREAS rates of optimal care for diabetes, asthma, and depression are significantly lower in those whose preferred language is Hmong, Karen, Spanish, and Somali, with depression remission rates as low as 1.9%; and

WHEREAS Bethesda Hospital is one of only two facilities in the state of Minnesota that cares for long term acute care (LTAC) patients, who are ventilator-dependent, are on inpatient dialysis, or have multi-organ or multi-system failure, postsurgical or organ transplant complications, complex wounds that need care, or traumatic or acquired brain injury; and

WHEREAS M Health Fairview announced plans in November 2019 to cut over 30 beds at Bethesda Hospital and the potential to close St. Joseph's Hospital within three years; and

WHEREAS Saint Joseph's Hospital is a vital employer located in the central business district in downtown Saint Paul, and Bethesda is also a vital employer located just outside of downtown; both institutions serve as significant sources of jobs employing a diverse workforce, offer high paying wages and good benefits, and contribute to the economic vitality of Saint Paul; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council strongly opposes all diminishment of hospital beds within its borders and is committed to maintaining and expanding beds when necessary, especially inpatient mental health beds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council requests full transparency from the M Health Fairview Board of Directors and CEO James Hereford regarding any plans to alter healthcare services within its borders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council supports adequate and accessible health care access for all and supports steps towards ensuring the continued care of the residents of Saint Paul and the state of Minnesota.