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May 5, 2017

Brett Truett
#NoHospitalDowntown
10-12 Liberty St.
Utica, NY 13502

Dear Brett,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with my office. I have reviewed your April 27 letter, and I appreciate that you understand how difficult it was to secure and deliver this funding for our region – not only once, but twice, after the Governor briefly played political games with the initial money. Assemblyman Brindisi and I fought hard to keep this funding in the budget because we believe it has the potential to significantly improve the health care services in our community.

This is important: Because many other areas were aggressively trying to secure this funding for their own hospitals, the language in the legislation had to be constructed and worded in such a way to target this funding to Utica. This ensured that the funding would not be split up among any other regions. But I must be very clear, at no point was this funding tied to any specific location or any preferred site within Utica.

The intention has always been to leave the hospital site selection up to Mohawk Valley Health System, with full engagement and input from the public. Once MVHS had been designated to receive this funding, I have publicly advocated that MVHS must put together a budget, timeline, and location site analysis to ensure the hospital project is well thought-out and accomplished in the community's best interest. And, I have argued that the hospital project must be designed to meet the needs of the public without undermining the other independent and specialized health services that have become part of our community in the meantime.

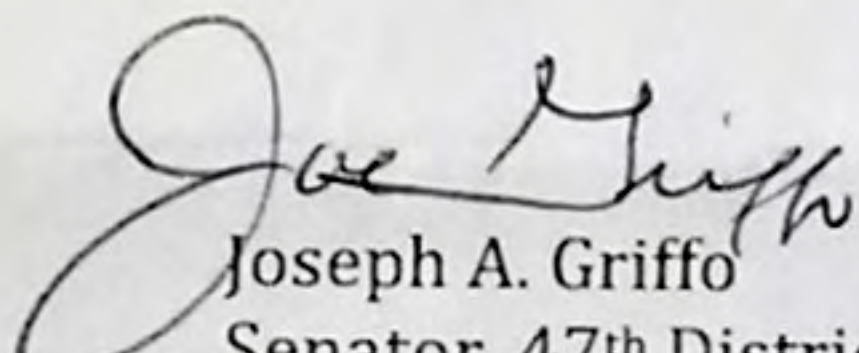
Furthermore, I have continuously urged that MVHS develop a definitive plan to repurpose the current properties in a way that fosters further development, stimulates the economy and benefits our tax base.

With this designated funding, MVHS began to look at various possible locations for a hospital. Based on the input of their Board and consultants, the downtown site was identified as the most ideal location. As a result of their professional decision, I have publicly stated my support for their preferred location. But at no point did I suggest or direct that MVHS put the hospital downtown, and any suggestion to the contrary is false and absurd. I am not privy to every conversation other

officials have had concerning the hospital, so I cannot speak for them. But as far as I am concerned, my position has always been to look objectively at the facts, and locate the hospital wherever makes the most sense. I have reiterated many times to MVHS that the hospital project should not be forced to fit a preferred location simply because that's where they want it – if a particular site won't work, then they should look elsewhere.

The bottom line is that the MVHS hospital project should be located in a place that complies with the language of the legislation, while best serving the health needs of the community. Our region is fortunate to receive such a substantial investment in our healthcare, and I trust that MVHS will ultimately use their best judgment in doing what is right for the region.

Sincerely,


Joseph A. Griffo
Senator, 47th District

cc: Honorable Anthony Brindisi, Assemblyman
Honorable Anthony Picente, Oneida County Executive
Honorable Robert Palmieri, Mayor, City of Utica
Mr. Scott Perra, CEO, MVHS