

MOHAWK VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM HOSPITAL PROJECT

PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD **ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

WHEREAS, on November 15, 2018, the City of Utica Planning Board (“Planning Board”) issued a notice of completion and public hearing (“Notice”) under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) relative to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) for the massive multi-million dollar Mohawk Valley Health System Hospital Project (“Project”);

WHEREAS, the Notice specified the public comment period to be from November 19, 2018 to December 27, 2018;

WHEREAS, the duration of the public comment period is only 39 days, which includes two major holidays (i.e., Thanksgiving and Christmas);

WHEREAS, the Project is a huge undertaking with a variety of potential long-term environmental impacts, evaluation of which has resulted in a lengthy, extremely complex DEIS totally more than 3,500 pages;

WHEREAS, the Project, if approved and constructed will result in massive impacts to the 25-acre footprint and beyond, including the destruction or impairment of multiple historic structures, 40 businesses, 5 non-profit organizations/facilities, and the character of the Columbia-Lafayette neighborhood as a whole;

WHEREAS, due to the far-reaching impacts and complicated nature of the Project, there are many concerns regarding this Project which require careful consideration and deliberation;

WHEREAS, due to the complexity of the issues and the many people impacted by this Project, there is a need to coordinate review of the DEIS in order to allow for meaningful public participation in the SEQRA process and comment on the DEIS;

WHEREAS, the 39 days provided for public comment, which also includes two major holidays (occurring on a Thursday and a Tuesday and thereby effectively eliminating no less than 4 days from the public review period), barely exceeds the 30-day minimum comment period required by SEQRA regulations (6 NYCRR 617.9[a][3] & [a][4][iii]) and, in any event, is

inadequate to allow for a thorough, meaningful review by the public of the more than 3,500 pages of the DEIS;

THEREFORE, the undersigned respectfully request an extension of the public comment period of at least sixty (60) days in order to allow for meaningful public participation in the SEQRA process relative to public review of and comment on the DEIS.

