



January 26, 2010

Richard Daines
Commissioner
New York State Department of Health
Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12237

Re: St. Vincent's Hospital

Dear Commissioner Daines:

We are writing to you regarding the possible restructuring of services at St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village, which would convert the hospital from an acute care facility providing trauma and emergency services, to a community health center. This proposed conversion is unacceptable to the residents of Manhattan's West Side.

We've known for sometime that St. Vincent's has been facing serious fiscal hardship. The economic depression and the associated reductions in funding have further endangered St. Vincent's financial stability.

We understand the New York State Department of Health (DOH) is currently exploring options for restructuring St. Vincent's Hospital—including bringing on new affiliates. We have concerns, however, that this decision is based solely on the perspective of fiscal solvency. If the DOH takes such an approach, it will fail to account for the full ramifications these decisions have on the lives and safety of Manhattan's residents.

For over 160 years, St. Vincent's Hospital has provided emergency care and a full range of health care services to residents of Greenwich Village and other nearby neighborhoods. St. Vincent's mission is not just important to its local community, but also to the entire City. Closing the St. Vincent's Emergency Room and Level 1 Trauma Center would be devastating to the local community, and in the event of a catastrophe, would endanger the City. It is currently the only Level-1 trauma center serving neighborhoods from Midtown to Downtown and it played a crucial role in caring for those affected by the September 2001 terrorist attacks.

This is not the time for rash decisions, but prudence. Any decision to restructure St. Vincent's Hospital must be based on a full assessment of the community's health care needs, and happen only after the DOH and the community have a full understanding of

the potential impacts on Manhattan's health system as a whole. It is crucial that the West Side of Manhattan have an acute care facility with a 24-hour, 365 day per year emergency room.

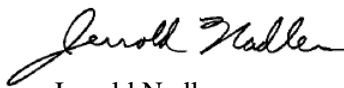
We strongly urge DOH to immediately stop the current course of action and create a public process to provide for a fully informed decision, allowing for consideration of other proposals and active community involvement. The health and safety of our communities are too important to tolerate service changes without adequate planning.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Scott M. Stringer
Manhattan Borough President



Jerrold Nadler
Congressmember



Christine C. Quinn
NYC Council Speaker



Thomas K. Duane
New York State Senate



Deborah J. Glick
New York State Assembly



Richard Gottfried
New York State

cc: Governor David Paterson
Community Board 2
Community Board 4