

## Kearney advocates 'pause' in Jewish Hospital sale

Business Courier of Cincinnati - by [James Ritchie](#) Staff Reporter

State Sen. Eric Kearney has written to Ohio's attorney general suggesting that "a pause is needed" in the proposed sale of Jewish Hospital to **Mercy Health Partners**.

The **Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati** is trying to take hospital out of the **Health Alliance** and sell it to Mercy for \$180 million. The pending deal was first announced in July and could close by the end of the year.

"Simply put, a hasty sale could potentially impact the University of Cincinnati and University Hospital in a negative way and put these two critically important institutions at risk," wrote Kearney, who represents the state's 9th district, in an Oct. 21 letter. "I am particularly concerned about the adverse impact on University Hospital's ability to conduct its mission of serving as Cincinnati's primary safety net hospital."

University Hospital is part of the Health Alliance. UC leaders have complained that the profitability that's made Jewish an attractive acquisition target effectively came through subsidies by University Hospital. Now the UC board accuses the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati of wanting to take the money and run.

Any destabilization of University Hospital, the board claims, could lead to cuts of services, resident training, education and research.

"A pause is needed for the Cincinnati community to fully evaluate the sales impact upon health care in Cincinnati," Kearney wrote, adding: "Providing these institutions the opportunity to identify alternative affiliations or partnerships will enable them to secure their own futures and thereby protect the integrity of the entire Cincinnati-area healthcare community."

Cincinnati City Council is also planning public hearings on the issue. Meanwhile, Mercy Health Partners has made an overture toward the 43 **Alliance Primary Care** doctors practicing at Jewish, offering them bonuses of as much as \$50,000 if they sign on by Oct. 31. Alliance Primary Care is part of the Health Alliance.

Those who delay will see the bonus decrease by \$5,000 per week, according to a letter from Mercy CEO James May and Senior Vice President Yousuf Ahmad to the physicians.

Mercy is clearly going for bulk. If more than 40 physicians sign with Mercy by Oct. 31, each doctor can get an additional \$10,000. If more than 30 sign, then \$5,000 per doctor will be available.