



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

October 30, 2009

The Honorable Richard Cordray
Ohio Attorney General
30 E. Broad St., 17th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Attorney General Cordray:

I am writing on behalf of the membership of the Cincinnati Chapter of the NAACP regarding an issue of critical importance to our membership, the City of Cincinnati, and the Greater Cincinnati region.

You are no doubt aware that the Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati is moving rapidly to close the sale of its hospital to the Mercy Health Partners – apparently by December 31, 2009. Many expect that this sale would result in a break-up of the Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, the major safety-net health system of Cincinnati, which includes Jewish Hospital and the University of Cincinnati, and puts at risk over \$115 million of charity care to the communities of Cincinnati. The potential break-up of this charitable, not-for-profit hospital alliance has enormous implications for safety-net services and likely dire consequences for the care and well-being of the poor, the vulnerable, the uninsured and underinsured residents of Cincinnati and the region. It is the integration of the hospitals within the Health Alliance, in association with the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine that allows the economic sustainability of the charitable not-for-profit mission of these institutions. A split would threaten this mission.

Our community allows these institutions tax-exempt status in exchange for their charitable missions and we expect them to keep this community commitment. Therefore, the NAACP would not support any break-up or restructuring of the Health Alliance that threatens care to the most vulnerable in our community. If these institutions wish to behave like for-profit institutions without a concern for the communities they serve, then their 501(c)3, not-for-profit, tax-exempt status should be challenged and this case presented to the U.S. Justice/Treasury Departments and U.S. Senate Finance Committee for review.

The NAACP is thus asking the Ohio Attorney General's office to disallow any break-up of the Health Alliance until a clear plan is presented to this community on how to prevent the negative consequences of such an organizational split and a comprehensive plan that clearly shows safety-net service sustainability in this community and region. Such an analysis should be the minimum obligation of any responsible community steward regarding decisions from institutions that hold such a consequential impact on the life and death indicators within our community.

We encourage your careful and thoughtful consideration of this matter, and appropriate intervention to prevent such a serious threat to the health and well-being of the citizens of Cincinnati and our region. We also thank you for your diligent service to the State of Ohio.

Sincerely,


Christopher Smitherman
President, Cincinnati NAACP

CC: Gov, State Senate cmt chairs, Members of Council, Mayor, City Manager & Solicitor, UC Pres, UC Dean School of Medicine, UC & Jewish hosp CEO, NAACP Membership, NAACP Attorney, Baptist Ministers Conference, Christ Hospital CEO, University CEO

4439 Reading Road, Suite 202 Cincinnati, Ohio 45229 • 513.281.1900 voice 513.281.4454 fax • naacp@fuse.net
website cincinnati-naacp.org
