



September 23, 2013

Members of the Virginia
Medicaid Innovation & Reform Commission

Dear MIRC Members,

I am requesting your support of the Medicaid expansion in the Commonwealth of Virginia. I write to you on behalf of the citizens of Wise County and the patients cared for by Norton Community Hospital.

Wise County is located in the coalfield region of far southwest Virginia. Our local and regional economy continues to struggle with layoffs and workforce reductions in various mining companies and supporting enterprises. The Wise County unemployment rate (July 2013) is 10.0% as compared to the State wide rate of 5.8%. In addition, 10.7% of the residents of Virginia live below the poverty line while 21.6% of the residents of Wise County live in poverty (US census). Further, Wise County has a much greater number of children living in poverty (28%) as compared to Virginia (16%) or nationally (14%).

The quality of life for many residents in Wise County is also very poor. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation produces its [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#). This report lists the rank of the health of each county in the nation. The report ranks Wise County as 124th in health outcomes out of 133 municipalities in Virginia.

Norton Community Hospital serves with distinction these citizens of Wise County. 20.8% of our patients are Medicaid beneficiaries and 8.9% of our patients are charity or self-pay patients. Medicaid expansion is essential to small rural community hospitals, such as Norton Community Hospital. As we shoulder additional reimbursement reductions from the Affordable Care Act, the community need for quality health care in Wise County continues.

I respectfully request your support of Medicaid expansion in Virginia.

Sincerely,

Mark T. Leonard
Chief Executive Officer
Norton Community Hospital



**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
NORTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL RELATING TO
MEDICAID RESTRUCTURING & EXPANSION**

WHEREAS, providing compassionate, high-quality health care to our community is our highest priority; and

WHEREAS, health care should be delivered using available evidence-based best practices; and

WHEREAS, our health care system must achieve long-term financial sustainability; and

WHEREAS, approximately one million Virginians currently lack health insurance, significantly lowering the health status of the Commonwealth and shifting the financial burden to the privately insured population; and

WHEREAS, hospitals' emergency departments function as the provider of first, last and only resort for most Virginians without insurance; and

WHEREAS, NORTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL provided care for 18,781 Medicaid insured patients and 6,843 uninsured patients in 2012; and

WHEREAS, NORTON COMMUNITY HOSPITAL employs 495 individuals; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) by Congress in 2010 includes provisions that place significant, undue financial burden on hospitals and health systems; and

WHEREAS, in June of 2012 the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that Medicaid Expansion by states under the PPACA is optional, potentially removing many of the benefits of health care reform for uninsured individuals and health care providers; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable and prudent for the Commonwealth to provide to those currently without health insurance coverage certain Medicaid benefits, and

WHEREAS, Virginia should, in a fiscally prudent fashion, seize on the expansion opportunity provided by the PPACA to foster overall Medicaid sustainability by reforming the current program and structure the best possible approach to providing coverage to the currently uninsured; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors supports a fundamental reform of the Medicaid program, including but not limited to benefit adjustment and care management reform ; and, be it

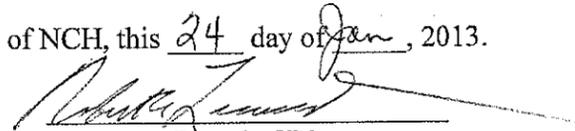
RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board shall communicate this position to the Members of the General Assembly who represent constituents within our service area as well as the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House of Delegates.



CERTIFICATE

The undersigned Secretary of the Board of Directors of Norton Community Hospital ("NCH"), hereby certifies that the foregoing is a true, correct and complete copy of a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors of NCH present and voting at a meeting duly called and held on Jan 24, 2013, and that such resolution has not been repealed, revoked, rescinded or amended, and is in full force and effect on the date hereof.

WITNESS the following signature of NCH, this 24 day of Jan, 2013.


Secretary, Board of Directors,
Norton Community Hospital