

ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Executive Chamber
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

As Chair of the Erie County Legislature, I am writing you regarding Erie County Medical Center (ECMC), Western New York's only designated Level 1 Adult Trauma Center, which includes the region's only Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program. For the first time in its 100 year history (first opening in 1918 at its current site on Buffalo's East Side as the Buffalo City Hospital), ECMC has embarked on a public fundraising campaign to support the construction of a new, state-of-the-art Trauma Center/Emergency Department. It is estimated that the cost for the new facility is \$55 million and the Greater New York Hospital Association (GNYHA) strongly supports ECMC's request of \$10 million for this project from New York State.

With the expansion of the Trauma Center/Emergency Department opportunities for new employment will occur in the construction phase of the facility, where hundreds of skilled trades workers will gain employment on the estimated 18-month project. Further, the hospital's new Trauma Center/Emergency Department will lead to new full-time and part-time positions in the future state-of-the-art facility, providing new employment opportunities for nurses, PAs, LPNs and other healthcare positions. It should be noted that ECMC is within a half mile of the Northland Corridor Redevelopment Project, which you have committed \$44 million to create an urban business park and workforce training center aimed at providing employment opportunities for area residents in advanced manufacturing and energy. So both developments will further strengthen East Side-based projects supporting much needed investment and job creation.

The hospital's need for expanding its Trauma Center/Emergency Department is critical to meet current and future demands for emergency care of the residents of the eight counties of Western New York. ECMC's current Emergency Department was built in the 1970s for 45,000 visits and now cares annually for close to 70,000 Western New Yorkers. A modern facility will address this important community need by increasing the Emergency Department's square footage from the current 26,000sf to 54,000sf, featuring a state-of-the-art design that improves patient flow, quality of care, and the overall patient

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experience. Most importantly, the new design and technology will help the hospital's trauma physicians and nurses save lives.

I am hopeful that New York State, as it has done in recent years for other hospitals in Western New York and elsewhere in the state, will support this necessary and critically important capital project. To date, ECMC has raised over \$9 million from private sources, including local philanthropic organizations, ECMC Board members, and the hospital's Executive and Physician leadership. It currently has several pending requests with other regional philanthropic groups. By supporting ECMC's \$10 million request, this level of support will emphasize the state's acknowledgement of the vital role ECMC and its Trauma Center/Emergency Department play in the delivery of quality health care services, particularly in emergency and trauma situations, for the residents of Western New York.

The new Trauma Center/Emergency Department will also address an important community need by expanding capacity to serve more patients annually; build on ECMC's strong and growing relationship with the University at Buffalo's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences; train the next generation of emergency medicine clinicians; and recruit top residents to work in a state-of-the-art setting. A key outcome is that the new facility will enhance UB's and ECMC's ability to attract leading talent and provide high quality learning experiences for generations of healthcare professionals.

ECMC's new Trauma Center/Emergency Department will also better prepare our region to respond if necessary to any mass casualty event, which, with the Trauma Center/Emergency Department's current configuration, would present serious problems for an appropriate and adequate response. Simply, the current design of the hospital's Trauma Center/Emergency Department would present serious difficulties in such a scenario; conversely, the planned new facility would greatly improve ECMC's ability to handle such events.

I appreciate your consideration of this vitally important funding request and I look forward to working with you and your Administration in providing this much needed support to one of Western New York's greatest healthcare assets, Erie County Medical Center.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Savage III
Chair

Cc: Melissa DeRosa
Robert F. Mujica
Paul Francis
Cathy Calhoun
John Maggiore