



**Prepared Remarks by Bill Robertson, President and CEO of Adventist HealthCare, to the Maryland Health Care Commission, January 20, 2011, regarding the Certificate of Need (CON) for Clarksburg Community Hospital**

Good Afternoon Commission Chair Moon, members of the Commission and Commission Staff... thank you for this opportunity to speak about the Clarksburg Community Hospital and Medical Campus. My name is Bill Robertson and it is my privilege to serve as President & CEO of Adventist HealthCare.

**Disappointment in Recommendation**

As I am sure you can appreciate, we are deeply disappointed by the Recommendation that you will consider today. We are not just disappointed at the outcome. We are also disappointed by the analysis and the deviation from the Commission's regulations contained in the Recommendation.

For the reasons set out in our Exceptions, the Recommended Decision should not be accepted because it deviates from the Commission's own health planning rules and results in the unnecessary duplication of existing services. Health planning is only one part of community planning. This Recommendation is out of step with the vision for growth and development of the County and the local community. This is why there has been such an outpouring of support for our project.

We do believe that the work Dr. Moon has done need not be abandoned... but that there is more work to be done before a final conclusion, affecting Montgomery County for decades to come, can be reached. This Commission can embrace what Dr. Moon has accomplished and the Commission can and should do more to ensure that the final ruling reflects the best possible effort.

Our disappointment stems also from the fact that despite our nearly 10 years of collaborative work with the local community, service area residents, private practice physicians, County government and area stakeholders to plan for the hospital and health care services that are needed in upper Montgomery county, to acquire the land necessary to develop the hospital, and to work through Montgomery County's rigorous planning requirements so that the hospital can actually be developed, equipped and staffed...that despite all of this, the Commission is offered a recommendation that reflects none of this advance planning and community engagement. The Holy Cross Hospital proposal simply does not reflect the desires of the up county community.

Our decade-long approach to community engagement and collaboration is consistent with the ethos and expectations of our State and communities and the resulting plan for Clarksburg Community Hospital is in the best interest of the people of upper Montgomery County and of the State of Maryland.

**Who We Are**

Adventist HealthCare, through its hospitals and services, cares for nearly 300,000 Marylanders each year, employs some 6,000 people, and provides extensive charity and community benefit – more than \$62,000,000 worth this past year alone. We are a local health care system. Our home is Maryland

with our Corporate Offices located in Montgomery County along with the majority of the health care services.

We are an active part of our community and collaborate with many organizations including the Food and Drug Administration, Montgomery and Prince Georges Counties, the Universities at Shady Grove, Montgomery College, MobileMed, Casa de Maryland, and Mercy Health Clinic.

Our mission, for more than 100 years, has been to restore people to health by providing the best care that science can deliver and to do so with extraordinary compassion. Today, the whole of Adventist HealthCare remains rooted in and driven by this purpose.

### **Exceptions to the Recommendation**

The Recommendation addresses many topics and Mr. Sollins [Adventist HealthCare's legal counsel] will, in a few minutes, talk further about some of our Exceptions. There are two areas of Exceptions that I will address.

The first deals with the Recommendation's suggests that our financial plan for Clarksburg was somehow risky, and that Adventist HealthCare's financial position is such that our focus should be on Washington Adventist Hospital alone. This suggestion is inconsistent with reality.

As was presented in our application and exceptions, our financing plan for Clarksburg is very conservative, using federally insured bonds. Adventist HealthCare is financially strong and well positioned to keep our commitments. The financial health of our health system is an area of focus for me along with the rest of the Adventist HealthCare team and we have delivered strong and improving performance over the years. And, our financial position is now even stronger following a recent transaction involving our long-term care facilities. Our financial plans are fiscally prudent and effectively support our Clarksburg plans.

We fully understand the vital role that Washington Adventist Hospital plays in the community and we focus on the ongoing success of that hospital every day. Just as we began planning for the health care needs of the citizens in upper Montgomery County nearly a decade ago, we also began planning in collaboration with our community and service area residents to relocate and replace the current Washington Adventist Hospital facility, a project that is essential to the future ability of that hospital to vibrantly serve its community as it has for more than a century.

A certificate of need for the Washington Adventist Hospital project has been filed with the Commission and we fully expect that it will be given the consideration it deserves, as was the case for other hospitals in the County such as Holy Cross and Montgomery General which were awarded CONs to improve their capabilities, facilities and market position.

### **How We Have Worked**

The second Exception I will address deals with Recommendation's skepticism about our market share projections. Adventist Health care has been actively a part of and serving the upper Montgomery County region for more than 30 years. We know the community and are a part of the community. We were interested in serving the community long before others thought there was any need for expanding access to care for upper Montgomery County.

We have the relationships with the physicians in the community and we have worked extensively in collaboration with our community, the service area residents, the County, private practice physicians, community organizations and area stakeholders to plan for and deliver the health

care services that upper Montgomery County needs. Because of this, we are confident in our market share projections.

Our planned hospital in Clarksburg is consistent with, supportive of and a part of the County's plans for the region. Our plans are supported by physicians who practice in the community and who have stated that they will utilize the new Clarksburg hospital. And Frederick Memorial Hospital is working with us to ensure that Clarksburg Community Hospital will be successful. Because of this we are confident in our market share projections.

When Shady Grove Adventist Hospital was approved more than 3 decades ago, a similar concern was raised about the wisdom of placing a new hospital, in a field, around which the population had yet to fully develop. And precedent was set three decades ago when Maryland's health care regulatory system acted with vision and concluded that placing a hospital where the future growth of the community was planned was in the best interest of the citizens of the State.

Health care planning in conjunction with community planning makes sense. And the plans for population growth along the I-270 corridor did not and have not stopped at Germantown. In fact, Montgomery County's last-planned-community is the region in and around Clarksburg and mirrors similar growth underway in southern Frederick County. Because of this we are confident in our projections. And we know that the Clarksburg Community Hospital can be built because today, the proposed site of Clarksburg Community Hospital has all the County land use approvals necessary to proceed. Because of this we are confident in our projections.

The new, future population center along the I-270 corridor is Clarksburg and Urbana, an area currently without adequate health care access. The choice before you is to either meet the future health care needs along the growing portions of the I-270 corridor, or to duplicate health care services in existing population centers.

### **Asking the Commission**

As members of the Commission, you have demonstrated your commitment to working on behalf of and in the best interest of the citizens of Maryland. Today, you are once again called to make a decision that will have far ranging effects. I ask that as you consider the facts and reach a conclusion, that you do so with vision... remembering that it will be the people of upper Montgomery County who benefit from or are negatively impacted by the conclusion you reach.

The most appropriate conclusion, the one that best meets both the current and future needs of the citizens of upper Montgomery and lower Frederick Counties, expands access to care, while recognizing the existing fixed costs and capacity of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Frederick Memorial Hospital, and the Germantown Emergency Center, is to approve the Clarksburg Community Hospital Plan.

Thank you for your attention this afternoon and for your consideration of the Clarksburg Community Hospital Certificate of Need.

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### ***About Adventist HealthCare***

*Adventist HealthCare, an integrated, health-care delivery organization based in Rockville, Maryland, was Montgomery County's first health-care provider and is one of the largest employers in the state of Maryland. The mission of Adventist HealthCare is to demonstrate God's care by improving the health of people and communities through a ministry of physical, mental and spiritual healing. For additional information, visit*

*[www.adventisthealthcare.com](http://www.adventisthealthcare.com)*