

Regions Hospital
640 Jackson Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
regionshospital.com



April 12, 2018

Alisha Simon
Health Economics Program
Minnesota Department of Health
P.O. Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

Dear Ms. Simon,

I am the Chief of Staff at Regions Hospital and the Chair of the Radiology Department at Regions Hospital. In addition, I am a Vice President of Saint Paul Radiology which provides radiology services in 20 hospitals and 63 clinics in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. Minnesota has long been recognized for the outstanding medical care provided by our hospitals, clinics and physicians. The ability for patients to choose their hospital has been a key factor in increasing competition and the quality of care provided to our residents. The three hospitals in St. Paul all play a vital role in providing care and furthering the health of our community. For this reason, I believe it is in the best interest of our community to support Regions Hospital's request for additional bed licenses as Regions plays a unique role in our community as a level one trauma center and safety net hospital.

I work regularly as a physician at Regions Hospital in the Radiology Department. Regions is bursting at the seams and, since all of the available bed licenses have been used, there is no way to accommodate any increased demand for services. As our population grows and ages, we cannot accommodate the needs of the community without additional beds. There are many days where the hospital is at full capacity. Patients ask the ambulance driver to take them to Regions because they have established relationships with the hospital and the doctors who work at Regions. If the hospital is full, the emergency room is placed on divert and ambulances are required to be sent elsewhere. I believe that patients should have the right to be able to choose the hospital where they receive care and, because Regions is at capacity and cannot expand, patients are being denied that choice. In addition, the continuity of their health care is interrupted as they are forced to go elsewhere.

As a member of the medical staff at Regions, I see patients waiting in the emergency room every day after the decision has been made that they need to be admitted for inpatient care. They are waiting in the emergency room because the hospital is full and there is no capacity. If we had additional beds, these patients could move to the floor quickly and begin to heal.

Additional bed capacity at Regions is important and, as our population grows and ages, all of the hospitals in the metropolitan area will need to grow to accommodate the increase in patients. Regions needs additional beds in order to fulfill their important role as a level one trauma center and safety net hospital in the East Metro.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Bagnoli Truman, MD
Chief of Staff Regions Hospital
Medical Director Radiology Regions Hospital
Vice President, Saint Paul Radiology