

# ORANGE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Committee: **Ways and Means**

Sponsors:

Co-Sponsors:

## DRAFT

Agenda No.

### RESOLUTION NO. OF 2016

#### **RESOLUTION OF THE ORANGE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OPPOSING THE PROPOSED PLAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR ST. LUKE'S CORNWALL HOSPITAL TO CLOSE ITS EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AT THE CORNWALL CAMPUS.**

**WHEREAS**, since 1931, Cornwall has had a hospital that serves and continues to serve the residents of the Towns of Blooming Grove, Highlands, New Windsor and Woodbury as well as the Town of Cornwall; and

**WHEREAS**, ten years ago, the Trustees of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital identified and addressed the medical needs of the local communities and spent \$4.2 million to expand and upgrade the emergency department at Cornwall Hospital; and

**WHEREAS**, Cornwall Hospital has been designated as an MS-1 Medical Support Hospital to receive and provide patient care to those individuals who have been exposed to radioactivity in the event of a nuclear incident at the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant; and

**WHEREAS**, emergency ambulance responders servicing Blooming Grove, Cornwall, Highlands, New Windsor and Woodbury believe that it is in the best interest of those communities and the public health that Cornwall Hospital emergency room remain open; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 13, 2016, St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital announced "Expansion of Programs on its Cornwall Campus Emergency Services Consolidated to "Right Size" Care Delivery. The proposed plan purports to expand primary care services and access to physician services on the Cornwall campus, which includes enhancing the Littman Cancer Center and oncology services as well as outpatient services for cardiac, pulmonary, physical, rehabilitation services, and occupation and speech therapy; and

**WHEREAS**, however, the "Enhanced" services plan totally eliminates Emergency Services from the Cornwall campus. On January 12, 2017, at 7 a.m. the Cornwall Emergency Department will close. Instead, "an ambulance will be stationed at the Cornwall campus for a short period for those that may present to the Emergency Department during the transition." Emergency Services will then only be provided at the hospital's Newburgh campus; and

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Legislature maintains its position that 24-hour emergency services at the Cornwall campus of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital is a critical component to any "Rightsizing Plan" for medical care services to be provided to the residents of the Towns of Blooming Grove, Cornwall, Highlands, New Windsor and Woodbury.

**WHEREAS**, according to Medicare.gov (the official U.S. Government Site for Medicare), St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital emergency care department already has a high volume (40,000 -59,999) of patients that are seen annually. The average patient spent approximately 360 minutes in the

emergency room before being admitted to the hospital as an inpatient. It is noteworthy to add, that in New York State the average waiting time for admission was 361.5 minutes, while the national average was 298 minutes. If the Cornwall Hospital emergency department were to close, the Newburgh campus' emergency room services would have to accommodate the hospitals' patient figures of an additional two patients an hour (48 patients a day/336 patients a week).

**WHEREAS**, there is no telling how this "Rightsizing plan" and closure of Cornwall's emergency room would affect the emergency and critical care services required for the public at the already over-crowded Newburgh ER. There is no doubt that this will endanger the public health and safety of citizens of Eastern Orange County, the visitors who come to Orange County tourist destinations such as Woodbury Commons, West Point and Stewart International Airport, and vehicular and commercial traffic on our roadways.

**WHEREAS**, Orange County is a growing county, with anticipated population growth in the southeastern corridor and economic development within the Hudson Valley region. The Board of Trustees should develop a master plan for health care services that align with the needs of this County and region.

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Orange County Legislature respectfully requests that the Board of Trustees of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital reverse its decision to close the Emergency Department at the Cornwall Hospital campus; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Orange County Legislature requests that the Trustees of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, work with the affected communities, elected officials and emergency responders towards finding an alternate solution to closure of its emergency department; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Clerk of the Orange County Legislature is hereby directed to send certified copies of this resolution to the Trustees of St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital, to Joan Cusack-McGuirk, President and Chief Executive Officer, Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, New York State Health Commissioner Howard Zucker, New York State Department of Public Health and Health Planning Council and to Senator William Larkin and Assemblyman James Skoufis, Supervisors for the Towns of Cornwall, New Windsor, Highlands, Newburgh, Woodbury and the Mayor for the City of Newburgh and Mayors for the Villages of Cornwall-on-Hudson and Highland Falls.

**DATED: DECEMBER 22, 2016**

**STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF ORANGE**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, JEAN M. RAMPPEN**, Clerk of the County Legislature of said County of Orange, have compared the foregoing copy of resolution with the original resolution now on file in my office and which was passed by the County Legislature of said County of Orange on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of December 2016 and that the same is a correct and true transcript of such original resolution and the whole thereof.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and the official seal of said County Legislature this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2016.

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Clerk of the County Legislature of the County of Orange