



JNESO

DISTRICT COUNCIL 1, IUOE / AFL-CIO
the professional health care union

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JNESO, District Council 1, IUOE-AFL-CIO participates in Public Hearings for St. Mary's Hospital in Passaic

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North Brunswick, January 15, 2014 – St. Mary's has seen its share of buyers and bankruptcy over the last 10 years. "Passaic and surrounding communities deserve a hospital that provides quality healthcare and in the same respect is on financially sound footing," Virginia Treacy, Executive Director, JNESO District Council 1, said. "St. Mary's is the last remaining hospital in Passaic. Our hope is that a buyer provides that fiscal stability." JNESO is the healthcare union that represents over 500 nurses and technical professional employees at St. Mary's.

As required by law to finalize the sale of St. Mary's, the hospital and Prime have participated in the Certificate of Need (CoN) application and the Community Health Assets Protection Act (CHAPA) processes. This is where several sets of questions are sent to the buyer to answer.

Where the process normally takes three to six months, this review has taken the better part of a year.

When the Department of Health and Attorney General deems the application as complete, the buyer and seller now participate in the public hearing portion of the process. JNESO has requested and received materials through the Open Public Records Act on a regular basis to ensure the bidding/selection process was transparent and that all state regulations were adhered to. "We are happy to participate in public hearings because public disclosure is a necessary tool for the community to ensure that its asset (the hospital) is utilized in the best public interest," Treacy said. "In fact, JNESO participated in a meeting with a representative from Prime, the St. Mary's CEO, and community leaders back in September because there were still questions about the sale and hospital services."

Prime has agreed to retain all collective bargaining unit members with St. Mary's. "Our role is to ensure that our members have safe working conditions and a fair equitable contract, so that they have the tools to serve the patients of St. Mary's," Treacy said.

Prime has already poured in millions of dollars into St. Mary's Hospital for operational purposes and plans to invest \$40 million at the hospital for capital improvements, service expansions, technology, and facility maintenance according to their Certificate of Need application.

It is JNESO's hope that the NJ Attorney General's office and the Department of Health will determine that it is in the public's interest to approve this transaction. Should conditions be

placed upon the buyer to finalize this sale, conditions should be placed on all hospitals both non-profit and for-profit.

JNESO District Council 1 is a professional healthcare union representing over 5,000 healthcare professionals in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.