

NASSAU-SUFFOLK HOSPITAL COUNCIL, INC.

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MEMBER HOSPITALS

Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center
East Patchogue

Catholic Health Services of Long Island

- **Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center**
West Islip
- **St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center**
Smithtown
- **St. Charles Hospital**
Port Jefferson
- **St. Francis Hospital**
- **Mercy Medical Center**
- **New Island Hospital**

East End Health Alliance

- **Eastern Long Island Hospital**
Greenport
- **Peconic Bay Medical Center**
Riverhead
- **Southampton Hospital**
Southampton

Long Beach Medical Center

Long Beach

John T. Mather Memorial Hospital
Port Jefferson

Nassau University Medical Center
East Meadow

New Island Hospital
Bethpage

North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System

- **Glen Cove Hospital**
- **North Shore University Hospital**
- **Plainview Hospital**
- **Syosset Hospital**
- **Franklin Hospital**
- **Huntington Hospital**
- **Southside Hospital**

Stony Brook University Hospital
Stony Brook

Veterans Affairs Medical Center
Northport

Winthrop South Nassau University Health System

- **South Nassau Communities Hospital**
Oceanside
- **Winthrop-University Hospital**
Mineola

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Health Reform Countdown

Hospital and Health Leaders Talk Frankly with Congressmen Bishop and Israel

A House vote on the health reform bill previously passed by the Senate in December could come as soon as this weekend. But before that happens, Long Island's Congressional delegation wants their health care constituents to understand the complexities of this historic measure. That's why Congressman Steve Israel and Congressman Tim Bishop reached out to the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council (NSHC) and asked this industry group to hold a conference call on Wednesday, March 17, 2010 for hospitals and other area providers. The Hospital Council is the association that represents Long Island's hospitals.

The call invited hospital CEOs, other providers, and health advocacy organizations to hear the

congressmen's perspective on the health care reform package. They urged the health community to look past the media's attention to legislative procedure and focus instead on its substance, emphasizing that the cost of doing nothing is very high.

NSHC members expressed their concerns about the bill, which may come up for a vote in the House as soon as Sunday. Andrew Mitchell, CEO of Peconic Bay Medical Center, pointed out that the bill's cuts in provider payments, which help to finance coverage for the uninsured, hit hard at community hospitals that serve a large Medicare patient population. Monica Mahaffey from Stony Brook University urged the congressmen to ensure that New York is not penal-

ized for progress it has already made in covering the uninsured.

Hospital Council COO Wendy Darwell emphasized that, while Long Island hospital leaders are encouraged by many of the bill's provisions, the region faces more than \$2.2 billion in cuts to Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funding and annual inflationary adjustments, known as the marketbasket update. Those cuts were supposed to be offset by corresponding coverage of the uninsured; however, the Medicare cuts begin immediately, while coverage of the uninsured will take years to achieve. Both Congressman Israel and Congressman Bishop emphasized that these issues were still under negotiation and that they are fighting for New York's fair share.

State Budget Threatens Long Island Health Care

Hospital leaders talk openly with state legislators

Long Island's state legislators also met recently with hospital CEOs to hear this group's concerns about proposals contained in the governor's 2010 - 2011 budget. Currently, the plan calls for \$46.8 million in taxes and Medicaid reimbursement cuts. The legislative briefing was held at the offices of the Nassau-Suffolk Hospital Council on Friday, March 12, 2010.

With just a handful of days remaining until the new state fiscal year begins on April 1, it's uncertain right now whether the legislature and executive branch will have a new spending plan in place by this deadline. Regardless, the following issues remain priorities:

- Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) on inpatient services represents nearly \$20 million of the impact on hospitals. This tax proportionately hits Long Island harder than any other region in the state.
- Any FMAP (Federal Medical Assistance Pro-

gram) money the state may receive from the federal government must be used to offset state Medicaid cuts.

- Long Island hospitals are set to lose \$20.3 billion in indigent care funding. Cuts to this funding stream would come at a time when Long Islanders need it the most. Thousands have lost their jobs and employer-provided health benefits.
- Readmissions policy that would penalize hospitals for potentially preventable readmissions needs to be based on sound methodology and not applied arbitrarily.

Long Islanders who are concerned about hospital and health care on Long Island can go to www.helppyourhospital.org, punch in their zip code, and see the impact of proposed cuts and taxes on hospitals in their community. The website offers users a chance to send messages to their state legislators.