

*Westfield, New York*  
CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

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VILLAGE OF WESTFIELD

September 1, 2009

Richard F. Daines  
Commissioner  
NYS Department of Health  
Corning Tower  
Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12237

Dear Dr. Daines:

Again I am writing to you in regards to the future of the Westfield Memorial Hospital. It is my understanding that as of June 2010 the Westfield Hospital will turn into a glorified first aid center that will only be open twelve hours a day. The State Department of Health does not anticipate the closure of this facility will negatively impact the health and welfare of the 30,000 residents within the service area.

With no emergency services available I am very concerned about the time of transportation to one of the other county hospitals, Dunkirk and Jamestown. In connection with this our fire department is volunteer, as is the EMT squad. This will necessitate them transporting longer distances with increased time away from their work place." **WE DO NOT HAVE A PROFESSIONAL AMBULANCE SERVICE."**

It must be taken into consideration that we have an aging population that depends on family and friends for transportation," **WE HAVE NO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION."** We also have a large Amish Community that depend our hospital for all types of medical service. Not having a hospital or emergency will create an extreme hardship for these residents as well as all others.

We have two mainline rail lines, Interstate 90, State Highways Routes 5, 20,394 where all types of hazardous materials are transported 24 hours a day. I am fearful of the results if there ever were a major accident causing the escape of any number these materials. With prevailing winds crossing Lake Erie, the Village of Westfield would be in the direct path of the fumes.

It was recently announced that Gov. Patterson is providing \$30 Million Dollars to Queens County to improve Health Care. This County already has 10 major hospitals, can they not afford to stand on their own, or are there to many available beds to make these hospitals profitable. I thought the reason for the Berger Commission was to make medical care more efficient by reducing beds, not to inject more money into inefficient hospitals. I understand the greater population in the Queens, however with ten facilities

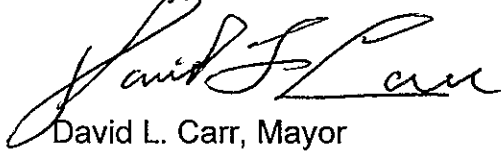
they must be with walking distance of each other. Two or three Queens Counties could be put into Chautauqua County with space left over and we have four facilities that are twenty to thirty miles apart.

It is also necessary to factor the extreme winter weather into the equation. I have been a resident of Westfield for 50 years, 23 of those years I was employed by the NYS Police. I have seen firsthand the severe weather conditions, many times these weather conditions have closed all highways leaving Westfield isolated from any of the neighboring medical facilities. What would the State Health Department suggest we do in case of a serious medical emergency in situations such as this?

In addition to the hardship closure of this facility regarding medical services, it will also have an enormous economic impact on the area. In salaries, purchases and capital spending there will be an estimated loss of \$20,735,000. Loss in State and local tax revenue is estimated at \$770,000. In addition closure will result in the loss of 125 full time positions with an average salary \$44,112.00.

Commissioner Daines, please carefully consider what the closure of this facility will mean to the residents of this area, both economically and medically. If after careful consideration, you still decide to close the emergency facility at the Westfield Hospital, I would like your explanation as to why this action will not negatively impact the residents within this service area.

Sincerely,



David L. Carr, Mayor  
Village of Westfield.

Cc: Governor David A. Paterson  
Senator Charles Schumer  
Representative Brian Higgins  
Senator Catherine Young  
Assemblyman William Parment  
County Executive Gregory Edwards  
Legislator Douglas Richmond  
Legislator Fred Croscut  
Legislator James Caflich