

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ED FLYNN, LIZ BREADON, JOHN FITZGERALD,
COLETTA ZAPATA, DURKAN, FERNANDES ANDERSON, MEJIA, MURPHY,
PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER AND LOUIJEUNE



CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR COMMITMENT FROM THE STATE
GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THE PRESERVATION OF ALL
STEWARD HOSPITALS IN BOSTON

WHEREAS, Steward Health Care System, LLC (Steward) is an integrated healthcare system and one of the nation’s largest private for-profit healthcare networks, owning over 30 hospitals in nine states, including Carney Hospital (founded 1863 in South Boston) in Dorchester and St. Elizabeth’s Medical Center (founded 1868) in Brighton; *and,*

WHEREAS, Carney Hospital and St. Elizabeth’s Medical Center were among six Caritas Christi Health Care hospitals acquired in 2010 by Steward as an affiliate of private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management, then the largest switch of hospital assets from nonprofit to for-profit status in Massachusetts; *and,*

WHEREAS, Many of Steward’s hospitals are designated by the Commonwealth as “High Public Payer” hospitals and by the federal government as “Disproportionate Share Hospitals” due to their high ratios of low-income patients who are either uninsured or rely on government-sponsored insurance programs such as Medicaid (MassHealth) and Medicare, and receive public reimbursements; *and,*

WHEREAS, As Steward Health Care filed for bankruptcy, the nine hospitals operated by Steward in Massachusetts are now trying to find new owners who will operate these hospitals in a responsible manner in order to continue serving patients across our state; *and,*

WHEREAS, Both St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Brighton and Carney Hospital in Dorchester are Steward facilities that serve some of our most vulnerable residents in Boston, and the closure of either of these hospitals will have a devastating impact on not only their patients, but also in the overall healthcare system in our city; *and,*

WHEREAS, As negotiations with potential buyers are now ongoing, there are concerning public statements and information from people with knowledge of internal conversations that the state government are not committed to the preservation of all Steward hospitals, and that some facilities, including Carney Hospital, will be considered “collateral damage” if they do not find a new owner; *and,*

WHEREAS, Carney Hospital has a long history of serving patients in our city, as it serves many residents of color living in Dorchester and elsewhere, and has strong ties to many South Boston residents who had worked there. Ongoing actions by Steward at Carney Hospital have created situations where either units are left inadequately staffed or not staffed at all, which then allows Steward to justify transferring patients and procedures to other facilities, and this deliberate, unchecked (except

for the nurses) efforts by Steward to limit patient access to Carney Hospital; *and*,

WHEREAS, The loss of Carney Hospital and/or St. Elizabeth's Medical Center would pose significant risk to the health and well being to the communities served these facilities, particularly a significant population of BIPOC and economically disadvantaged residents disproportionately impacted by service closures; *and*,

WHEREAS, The loss of Carney Hospital and/or St. Elizabeth's will also compromise and delay access to care all communities in Greater Boston, as already overcrowded facilities will be forced to absorb this population of patients; *and*,

WHEREAS, It is therefore critical for our state government to commit to ensuring that all Steward hospitals will survive this bankruptcy, and that the state government will do all that it can preserve these medical facilities in order to prevent the catastrophic loss of access to healthcare for our residents; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council urge the State Government to take all possible steps necessary to encourage and ensure there are qualified nonprofit bidders to preserve and advance both Carney Hospital and St. Elizabeth's Medical Center; ***AND BE IT FURTHER***

RESOLVED: That the City Council urge the State Government to find funding to attract potential bidders, recognizing the deterrent of the onerous rents of both hospital properties; ***AND BE IT FURTHER***

RESOLVED: That the City Council urge the State Government to deal with the onerous rents Medical Properties Trust (MPT) and McQuarry, the latter of which owns 50% of all the Massachusetts Steward properties alongside MPT; ***AND BE IT FURTHER***

RESOLVED: That the City Council urge the State Government to be prepared that if there are no bidders for a given hospital, to seize the property by eminent domain and to continue to operate the facility until a permanent operator is found.

Filed in Council: June 26, 2024