



May 17, 2016

Kenneth L. Davis, MD  
President and CEO  
Mount Sinai Health System  
1 Gustave L. Levy Place  
New York, NY 10029

Dear Dr. Davis:

We write to express our grave concern about the possibility of losing inpatient services at the Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus.

As you are undoubtedly aware, a recent story in the *The Villager* indicated that Beth Israel Hospital is slated for closure.<sup>1</sup> This follows previous reports of a meeting between you and First Deputy Mayor Anthony Shorris, which centered on Mount Sinai's plans to shrink Beth Israel.<sup>2</sup> In addition, we have received calls from Beth Israel employees informing us that staff levels are being reduced, and that a significant reduction in services is viewed as inevitable by senior staff members. These reports are troubling to us and to our constituents across Manhattan.

Beth Israel has been a constant presence and resource for the entire city, and the East Side of Manhattan in particular. Any downsizing or closure at Beth Israel threatens to further strain an already overburdened network of healthcare providers in Manhattan, reduce healthcare options and curtail services in the immediate neighborhood, and eliminate jobs.

First, we are extremely concerned about any loss of emergency room services. We've seen this story before citywide, and Manhattan has suffered in particular with the shuttering of St. Vincent's Hospital in Greenwich Village. After the closure of St. Vincent's, hospitals across the borough experienced a sharp rise in visits. The *Daily News* reported that Bellevue went from 8,000 to 10,000 monthly emergency room visits.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lincoln Anderson, "Beth Israel Hospital Set to Close Soon: Staff," *The Villager*, May 13, 2016. <http://thevillager.com/2016/05/13/beth-israel-hospital-will-be-closing-soon-staff/>

<sup>2</sup> Dan Goldberg, "Mount Sinai informs City Hall of possible Beth Israel downsizing," *Politico New York* Oct 12, 2015. <http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2015/10/8579348/mount-sinai-informs-city-hall-possible-beth-israel-downsizing>

<sup>3</sup> Patrice O'Shaughnessy, "Beth Israel Medical Center seeing influx of ex-St. Vincent's patients to ER," *The Daily News*, April 19, 2010. <http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/beth-israel-medical-center-influx-ex-st-vincent-patients-er-article-1.165281>

The same article reported that Beth Israel, NYU Langone, and New York-Presbyterian's Lower Manhattan Hospital also saw significant increases in visits and wait times.

Wait times at many emergency rooms in Manhattan are already double the national and state averages,<sup>4</sup> while residential construction continues unabated and the borough's population is growing. The loss of another emergency room could be catastrophic for our community.

We also continue to lose in-patient beds. The closure of St. Vincent's alone resulted in the loss of 400 in-patient beds. In 2006, the Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century proposed closing 328 in-patient beds at the former Cabrini Hospital based on the ability of hospitals like Beth Israel to pick up the slack. The Commission believed that "Cabrini's patients readily could be absorbed by its coverage partners, including Beth Israel Petrie Division, Bellevue, NYU Tisch, and Mount Sinai hospitals."<sup>5</sup> Similarly, it recommended that Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital downsize all of its 150 beds—and that subsequently was done.

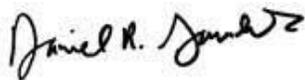
The Commission did not, however, recommend any reduction of beds for Beth Israel. We cannot yet assess the magnitude of the impact that downsizing or closing Beth Israel would have on other hospitals, or the negative impacts for the healthcare of all Manhattanites.

Second, we are concerned about downtown hospital services more broadly. In light of the growing population of our borough, we must carefully consider whether Manhattan would have enough hospital beds if we were to lose the beds at Beth Israel. More particularly, we want to ensure that the downtown community retains the hospital services we need in the area. The loss of the Beth Israel NICU is instructive—while Mount Sinai may have felt comfortable with closing the facility at Beth Israel because it has other NICUs in its system, this decision forces local parents to travel out of their area at a highly stressful and time-starved period in their lives.

Finally, we are concerned about job losses that would be associated with any downsizing or closure of the Beth Israel Mount Sinai campus. It is important to ensure that jobs like these remain available to middle class New Yorkers.

Please advise us of the current plans for the Beth Israel Mount Sinai campus. Rumors should not drive the conversation here; it is critical that we and our constituents have clarity on this situation.

Sincerely,



Daniel R. Garodnick  
Council Member



Rosie Mendez  
Council Member



Carolyn B. Maloney  
U.S. Representative

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<sup>4</sup> Data from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Data.medicare.gov program. Aggregated by ProPublica Dec. 17, 2014. <https://projects.propublica.org/emergency/state/NY>

<sup>5</sup> Final Report on the Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century, December 2006, p. 162



Gale Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President



Brad Hoylman  
State Senator



Brian Kavanagh  
Assembly Member



Richard N. Gottfried  
Chair  
Assembly Health Committee



Corey Johnson  
Chair  
Council Health Committee

cc: Anthony Shorris, First Deputy Mayor