

What They're Saying about WHS & UPMC

Supporters of the Washington Health System and UPMC affiliation showed up and shared remarks at a public hearing hosted by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General.



Commissioner Nick Sherman, Chairman of the Washington County Board of Commissioners said, "We unanimously support this affiliation between [WHS and UPMC]. This is very important for not only the critical services that are provided, but also for the total investment of almost \$300 million into Washington County."



City of Washington, PA

City of Washington Mayor, JoJo Burgess, said, "No matter how opposite you are from someone, [the affiliation] is an area of common ground that you can find to build off of to make sure everyone is successful."



State Representative Tim O'Neal said, "It's vitally important that we ensure this health system persist well into the future. [...] The fact of the matter is, if we want the health system to persist into the future, something has to be done. **We need to ensure that this health system remains an asset to our community and I believe the only option to do that is the acquisition with UPMC.**"

State Representative Josh Kail said, "Access to rural healthcare is a serious issue in a lot of different places and the completion of this transaction will ensure it's not an issue for my constituents. On top of that UPMC has committed to investing another \$300 million dollars for expanded services. **This is good for consumers, good for my constituents and good for our workers in the area.**"

Observer-Reporter

Donna Wiles RN, CNOR, WHS said, "Looking forward, I believe there will be profound benefits to integrating into the larger health system of UPMC. The integration or merger will ensure we can keep providing care but will also open the doors for both health care professionals and patients. With this merger we will gain access to advanced medical technology and a larger range of specialized services."



Jeff Kotula, Washington County Chamber of Commerce President said, "Partnering with the respected UPMC Health System and guaranteeing that high quality healthcare services remain available to our residents is certainly preferable to the alternative of Washington Health System continuing to lose money, cutting services, and withering into eventual closure."



Congressman Guy Reschenthaler said, "Rural hospitals across our nation face significant challenges...These same challenges are currently impacting WHS...This investment in southwestern Pennsylvania's economy will **increase job growth, access to care, and continued involvement in our local communities.**"



Eastern Atlantic States
REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

Steve Mazza, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC) Council Representative said, "Allowing this merger between WHS and UPMC will help raise up underserved communities not only by continuing to deliver excellent healthcare but also providing jobs that pay area-standard wages and benefits. This is why Eastern Atlantic State's regional council of carpenters strongly supports the merger between WHS and UPMC. We implore this committee to concur with the merger and not to let organizations who have their own self-interests over the needs and benefits of local communities."



LOCAL 66
Operating Engineers
66-A, B, C, D, O, and R

Mark Shepler, International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 66 Field Agent said, “That \$300 million mentioned: that’s **local jobs for local people**. Keep that in mind. We are in support of this merger.”



Ben Steinmeyer, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 5 Assistant Business Manager said, “Together these two organizations have made a commitment to this community and our region to continue to provide world class healthcare. On behalf of the IBEW and all of our members I’m proud to say we support this merger.”



Chris Geronimos, Business Manager, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades said, “For our members, this is vitally important. It’s important to them that they have the system that they’re used to. It’s important for them for the amount of work that will be coming their way. It’s important for the community, our members pay the taxes. They work in community. They live in a community. They know the community. For those reasons, we support this merger.”



Jeff Marcischak – Technical Analyst at WHS said, “Not only have I had the role of an employee, but also as a patient on many different levels, emergency care, outpatient care, therapy, as well as inpatient surgical care, so I feel comfortable speaking on behalf of this wonderful organization and the great staff that maintains and providing these services. WHS has some of the finest physicians you’ll find anywhere from primary care to specialists to surgeons... My family and I have also had the privilege of utilizing the UPMC health care system through which we have received outstanding care as well... Bottom line, I believe with these two great institutions coming together, our community will be even better served right here in our backyard.”



Marty Griffin of KDKA emphasized the importance of the WHS and UPMC affiliation, “We are all in. We are going to do everything we can to make a difference here because it matters.”

PITTSBURGH BUSINESS TIMES

Pittsburgh Business Times reported, “Overall, there was a supportive sentiment regarding the affiliation or acquisition, with a large group of supporters of the acquisition present in matching shirts.”

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Pittsburgh Post Gazette Editorial Board, “[WHS] reports that, if current trends continue, it will burn through its reserves during 2025. To stave off that outcome, it likely will have to close low-margin services, such as maternity care, this year. That would leave southwest Pennsylvania without labor-and-delivery services between Jefferson Hills and Morgantown...UPMC’s bid included a commitment to keep all the Washington Hospital’s facilities open for the next decade, along with a \$300 million promise of capital improvements over ten years...Consolidation is not good for rural health care, but closing is worse. And until there is a thorough reform of America’s broken health care system, those will be the only two options on the table.”



Kris Lesnock, RN – WHS Nurse said, “I’ve been an operating room nurse for 28 years. 23 of my years have been with this health system, and I currently manage the surgical department at the hospital. It is my hospital of choice for my family and myself...A merger with UPMC will enable surgical care at Washington Hospital to not only be maintained at its current level, but it will enable our operating room to have the newest technologies in advancing care. And if you build it, they will come. One thing I know about surgeons, if I have the technology, I will have some of the best surgeons around. They come with it, and that’s best for our community. So I fully support this merger.”