



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 23

Resolution calling on the New York State to prevent the Mount Sinai Health System from closing the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus.

By Council Members Rivera, Narcisse, Louis, Powers, Gutiérrez, Hudson, Schulman, Salaam, Sanchez, Williams, Riley, Marte, Cabán and Banks

Whereas, In New York State, a provider who contemplates the closure of a hospital facility must follow certain steps, as outlined by the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) in the Facility Closure Plan Guidelines; and

Whereas, Specifically, per the Facility Closure Plan Guidelines, a provider must give a verbal notification to the NYS DOH's Regional Program Manager or Program Director as soon as the provider begins considering a closure and at least 120 days before the proposed date of closure, with a written notification of the possible closure to follow no later than 48 hours after the verbal notification; and

Whereas, Furthermore, the New York State Commissioner of Health must approve in writing all hospital closure plans, and a closure plan is not to be considered approved until the provider has received a written notification from the New York State Commissioner of Health or the Director of the Center for Health Care Quality and Surveillance; and

Whereas, Moreover, information about a potential hospital closure may not be disclosed to the public, patients/residents, or staff prior to notifying the NYS DOH, submission of a facility closure plan, and a written approval of such plan by the NYS DOH; and

Whereas, As per the NYS DOH's Facility Closure Plan Guidelines, no actions related to the proposed closure of a hospital facility may be taken by the provider prior to receiving from the NYS DOH a written

approval of the closure and its plan; and

Whereas, On October 25, 2023, the Mount Sinai Health System sent to the NYS DOH a facility closure plan for its 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus in Downtown Manhattan, with the proposed closure date set for July 12, 2024; and

Whereas, In its intent-to-close letter to the NYS DOH, the Mount Sinai Health System cited a number of motivating factors underlying its decision to close the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus, including old, outdated infrastructure, rooms, and halls, which the Mount Sinai Health System claimed to be unable to modernize, as well as a declining inpatient census (a decrease of 73 percent in acute care admissions since 2012), operations at only about 20 percent to 28 percent of the hospital's full capacity, and increased labor and supplies costs, all of which led to the operating losses of over \$100 million annually, with the total loss to date standing at more than \$1 billion; and

Whereas, Moreover, according to the Mount Sinai Health System, it held over 80 meetings with elected officials and labor and community leaders, as well as 6 public forums between 2016 and 2020 as part of its analysis of the operations at the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus and engaged in ultimately unsuccessful efforts to reduce costs, enhance revenues, and obtain a financial assistance from the New York State before concluding in 2023 that the Beth Israel hospital facility should be closed; and

Whereas, In addition, in its intent-to-close letter to the NYS DOH, the Mount Sinai Health System claimed that between April 2023 and October 2023, it held more than 100 calls and meetings with elected officials in New York City concerning the proposed closure of the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus; and

Whereas, Furthermore, in the same intent-to-close letter to the NYS DOH, the Mount Sinai Health System stated that it plans to keep the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus open with a smaller bed count to align with the facility's declining inpatient census, but that due to a decreased staffing, it

anticipates “some reductions in services” prior to July 1, 2024; and

Whereas, On November 28, 2023, the Mount Sinai Health System held a public meeting at Baruch College in Downtown Manhattan regarding the proposed closure of the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus; and

Whereas, On December 14, 2023, residents of the area surrounding the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus held a rally to protest the facility’s closure, which was also attended by medical staffers, elected officials, and healthcare and community advocates, with CBS New York quoting advocates as saying that “losing the hospital would devastate the area” and citing the area’s residents’ outcry that the closure of the Beth Israel hospital would “[leave] the 400,000 people living below 24th Street dangerously underserved in terms of health care”; and

Whereas, Additionally, as CBS New York reported, at the December 14, 2023 rally, protesters accused the Mount Sinai Health System of a lack of transparency and of reducing and closing departments and services at the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus well before the proposed closure date of July 12, 2024; and

Whereas, As reported by the Becker's Hospital Review, in a letter dated December 21, 2023, the NYS DOH ordered the Mount Sinai Health System to cease and desist from closing beds and services at the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus without the required written approval of the New York State Commissioner of Health and under a threat of fines and other penalties, requested a written confirmation from the Mount Sinai Health System that the closures will stop; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State to prevent the Mount Sinai Health System from closing the 16th Street Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital campus.

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