

The Board of Supervisors

County Administration Building
651 Pine Street, Room 106
Martinez, California 94553

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Contra Costa County



David Twa
Clerk of the Board
and
County Administrator
(925) 335-1900

June 1, 2015

The Honorable Mark Leno
Chair, Budget Conference Committee
Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: LifeLong Community Clinic Extended Urgent Care – 4260-101-0001 Local Assistance—SUPPORT Assembly Proposal

Dear Senator Leno:

As Chair of the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County, I write to inform you of my support for the appropriation of \$2 million to the Department of Health Care Services to be allocated to Lifelong Community Clinic for the purpose of supporting extended hours for urgent care services at LifeLong.

West Contra Costa Health Care District closed its Doctor's Medical Center (DMC) hospital on April 20th of this year due to unsustainable operating losses, primarily due to low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates. **DMC was the only "public" hospital located in West Contra Costa serving the community's low-income population.** The only other hospital in this area is a small Kaiser facility. The Contra Costa County Regional Medical Center is located about 20 miles away and therefore the travel time to its emergency room is much longer.

The county and the community asked LifeLong Medical Care, a Federally Qualified Health Center in the area, to open an urgent care facility at its health center site across the street from DMC. Stakeholder partners from Kaiser and John Muir committed start-up costs for build-out of the facility, equipment, and start-up subsidy. Contra Costa County and the West Contra Costa Health Care District provided in-kind support and planning assistance. LifeLong was able to open a smaller version of the planned urgent care on April 19, 2015, the day before DMC closed its doors. The Urgent Care Center has been opened on a schedule of noon to 8 p.m., seven days per week.

The Urgent Care in West Contra Costa can provide access to walk-in services for most of the former DMC Emergency Department users. Services are being coordinated closely with the Kaiser emergency room in the area and with Contra Costa County Emergency Medical Services. LifeLong budget estimates project the need for a \$2 million per year subsidy to keep the Urgent Care open 12 hours per day which would capture up to 80% of former DMC users.

*\$2 million appropriation for Lifelong Community Clinic
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LifeLong Medical Care is a much-needed and highly effective health care provider in the community. For these reasons, I support the appropriation of \$2 million to be allocated to Lifelong Community Clinic and urge your Conference Committee to support the appropriation as well.

Sincerely,



JOHN GIOIA
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors
 Contra Costa County Legislative Delegation
 David Twa, County Administrator
 Members, Budget Conference Committee
 William Walker, M.D., Contra Costa Health Services
 Cathy Christian, Nielsen Merksamer