



March 22, 2022

The Honorable Theresa Gavarone  
Chair, Local Government & Elections Committee  
The Ohio Senate Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor North  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

The Honorable Tina Maharath  
Ranking Member, Local Government & Elections Committee  
The Ohio Senate Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor South  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chair Gavarone and Ranking Member Maharath,

I am the Chair of the Board of Trustees of The MetroHealth System and am writing on behalf of my fellow Board members to urge your support of HB 405, which includes provisions governing the board of trustees of county hospitals in charter counties. These changes will enable The MetroHealth System, as the only charter county hospital in the state of Ohio, to expand the size of its Board of Trustees from 10 to up to 15, and to allow for up to two members to reside outside of the hospital system's service area.

The MetroHealth System is a 185-year-old institution that provides essential healthcare services to the community. Over the years, it has grown much larger than the other county hospitals in Ohio. Given MetroHealth's size and complexity, the current and long standing 10-member limit of the size of the board no longer matches the governance needs of the hospital.

Allowing for more board members will enable us to add individuals with expertise in more areas to aid in the governance of this ever-evolving health care organization. It will also allow us to include more leaders engaged in our community who can help direct this anchor public hospital system in Northeast Ohio.

The requested language change includes a provision allowing for up to two board members to be residents outside of the area served by the hospital. This proposal recognizes that there are potential board members who are very involved in the Northeast Ohio community but may not live in the service area. As a charter county hospital, the appointment of board members would still be made only in collaboration with our Cuyahoga County government,



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namely the County Executive, County Council and judges – ensuring that each new board member is dedicated to the health and welfare of our community.

We have been fortunate to have outstanding board members leading The MetroHealth System for so many years and we know that it is the right time to expand the board to continue to enable The MetroHealth System to effectively address the health and wellness needs of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vanessa L. Whiting".

Vanessa Whiting, Chair

The MetroHealth System Board of Trustees