

September 30, 2022



Kootenai Health Board of Trustees & CEO

Katie Brodie, *Chair*

Robert Colvin, *Vice-Chair*

Teri Farr, *Secretary – Treasurer*

Dave Bobbitt, *Trustee*

Cindy Clark, *Trustee*

Thomas deTar, M.D., *Trustee*

Liz Godbehere, *Trustee*

Steve Matheson, *Trustee*

Robert McFarland, M.D., *Trustee*

Jon Ness, *CEO*

2205 Kootenai Health Way
Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, 83814

Dear Ms. Brodie, Mr. Colvin, Ms. Farr, Mr. Bobbitt, Ms. Clark, Dr. deTar, Ms. Godbehere, Mr. Matheson, Dr. McFarland and Mr. Ness:

We are writing to you as a unified group of elected Republican legislators and legislative candidates who represent all 12 state level seats in legislative Districts 2-5 which serve the people of Kootenai County. We are very concerned that since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, citizens have been continually dealing with issues related to medical freedoms including mask and vaccine mandates. During that time, we have all heard from constituents, friends and neighbors who have been concerned with the direction Kootenai Health has taken in response to these and other issues, especially considering the character of our community.

Over the last few weeks, it has come to our attention that the Kootenai Health Board of Trustees is considering changing from a district hospital model with an elected Board of Trustees, to a 501(c)(3) non-profit model with appointed Trustees. We understand that Idaho House Bill 603 allows district hospitals the same options already available to county hospitals but a non-profit hospital must broadly represent the public ***it serves***. We are concerned about the potential application of this bill in your situation versus the bill’s original intent.

We believe this development is alarming and troubling for northern Idaho residents. Our residents and Kootenai Health have enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship since 1956. County residents have made significant investments in our community hospital and as a result of the hospital’s status, the hospital has enjoyed not being subjected to property taxes. Furthermore, an Urban Renewal District was recently created specifically to advance the

"Health Corridor" and Kootenai Health. There is no question Kootenai Health has prospered tremendously from the mutual relationship between the hospital and the community but this proposed hospital model change threatens the long-trusted relationship. We believe that the community should maintain their voice in providing direction to Kootenai Health, which is vital to the regional well-being of citizens and the economy.

As the largest employer in Kootenai County and considering our community's considerable investment, we believe that any change to the status of Kootenai Health must come with full transparency as well as the involvement and engagement of the community and the voters. On behalf of our current and future Kootenai County constituents, we call on this Board to facilitate town hall format public hearings to listen to and engage citizens. This will be an opportunity to bring transparency to Kootenai Health's long-term strategy, allow the citizens a chance to make their voices heard, and give the board a venue to respond to community concerns and receive valuable feedback before making such an important decision.

Sincerely,

Joe Alfieri

Joe Alfieri, House D4A (Nominee)

Rep. Vito Barbieri

Rep. Vito Barbieri, House D2A

Carl J Bjerke

Carl Bjerke, Senate D5 (Nominee)

Phil Hart

Phil Hart, Senate D2 (Nominee)

Dale Hawkins

Dale Hawkins, House D2B (Nominee)

Ron Mendive

Rep. Ron Mendive, House D3A

Doug Okuniewicz

Rep. Doug Okuniewicz, House D2B

Elaine Price

Elaine Price, House D4B (Nominee)

Jordan Redman

Jordan Redman, House D3B (Nominee)

Heather Scott

Rep. Heather Scott, House D1A

Ben Toews

Ben Toews, Senate D4 (Nominee)

Tony Wisniewski

Rep. Tony Wisniewski, House D3B