

Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

September 7, 2021

RE: The Children's Medical Center Corporation BCH-21071411-HE DoN Application

Dear Determination of Need Program,

I am writing to support Boston Children's Hospital's proposal to modernize its existing facilities in Waltham and Weymouth and build an ambulatory surgical center in Needham. I believe this project will greatly benefit children, families, and communities across our state and improve access for patients seeking lifesaving or life-changing care.

As the mother of a Boston Children's Hospital patient and the parent Co-Chair of Boston Children's Family Advisory Council (FAC), I can speak directly to the value satellite expansion will bring to existing Boston Children's patients and families. I have a young adult daughter with spina bifida, which is a complex medical condition requiring lifelong neurosurgical, orthopedic, and urological care, among many other disciplines. She has received care at Boston Children's since 2007, including a wide range of ambulatory care, inpatient care, emergency department care, and surgeries. Given the complexity of her condition and the relevant expertise at Boston Children's, the hospital was the clear choice for her care, despite our closer proximity to other hospitals. She has received care at the Boston, Peabody, Waltham, and Weymouth campuses.

Based on our family's experience and the comments I've heard from fellow FAC members, I see the following as key factors driving a need for expansion and providing value to patients and families:

Convenience

Our family has traveled to Boston Children's hundreds of times over the last 14 years and I can confidently state that for ambulatory appointments, the transportation time generally takes far longer than the actual appointments, and we only live 32 miles from the hospital. Satellite locations reduce time out of school and time out of work, both of which have been critical issues for our family, and are for many families of patients with complex medical needs. Satellite locations tend to have less traffic, so still offer more convenience to families like ours who do not live any closer to a satellite location than we do the main campus. As one example, I live virtually equal distance from Boston Children's main campus (32 miles) and the Weymouth campus (33 miles), yet the trip to Weymouth often takes about half the time as the trip to the main campus given Boston traffic. Even Waltham (43 miles away), generally takes significantly less time than the main campus. The extra hour or two that it takes to get to and from Boston in traffic has often meant the difference between a half-day out of school and work or a full day out of school and work.

Costs:

Satellite locations are more cost effective, as there is no charge for parking and transportation efficiencies reduce other expenses (e.g., food, gas). I would estimate that we spend \$40 on average for every ambulatory appointment in Boston, beyond copays and other healthcare costs. Parking is

\$10, gas for 64 miles is about \$10, and adding 3-4 hours of transportation time on top of the appointment generally means we are away from home for at least one meal. While some of these costs still apply at the satellites, they are reduced by at least 25% for our family, and I suspect significantly more for families that live in or close to those communities.

Expansion of Appointments:

I am hopeful that the expansion of satellite locations will increase the availability of appointments at those locations, and on the Boston campus, as more people are able to schedule appointments closer to home. Coordinating care and consolidating appointments to reduce the total number of trips has been a priority for us, both for school and work purposes, but it is a major challenge, particularly at the satellite locations where services have been limited. There have been multiple times when we have had appointments at both a satellite location and the main campus on the same day due to appointment availability, further exacerbating the wasted time and the stress that comes with these appointments.

Health Equity:

I'd also like to note the importance of the satellite locations to increasing health equity. While our family has been able to handle the burdens of transportation times, costs, and care coordination outlined above, it has come with sacrifices. I'm not sure how we would have done so without the flexibility and stability of my job, and sufficient discretionary income. I hope bringing more of the exceptional care that Boston Children's provides to satellite locations will mean that fewer families have to weigh the extra indirect costs of care in Boston when making healthcare decisions for their children.

The proposed projects and investments will help Boston Children's grow this impact and reach even more families and more patients, clearly demonstrating the hospital's commitment to the health and well-being of children throughout Massachusetts. These projects will ensure that patients and families have access to a full range of high quality, integrated pediatric care services in convenient, lower-cost settings. In addition, they will meet the needs of surrounding underserved communities.

I am confident Boston Children's growing investments in children, families and communities will have a long-lasting impact and benefit future generations of children for many years.

Thank you for accepting this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Williamson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Aimee Williamson
62 Rosewood Lane
North Attleboro, MA 02763
aimeewilliamson@comcast.net

94 Braemoor Road
Brockton, MA 02301

September 9, 2021

Determination of Need Program
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Determination of Need Program:

This letter is personal. Boston Children's Hospital saved my granddaughter Avirey's life when she was months old and developed pulmonary stenosis. Were it not for the innovative and focused care provided to her she would not have survived! There are countless stories like that made possible by the physicians and staff at the hospital.

Please include my unqualified support for Boston Children's Hospital proposed expansion plans across Massachusetts and especially the project to move and improve the existing ambulatory facility in Weymouth.

Brockton has a significant Medically Underserved Area (MUA) as designated by the federal government. For any family, lack of access to basic health care presents a profound challenge. For a family navigating complex or life-threatening medical conditions, it can be insurmountable.

The existing Boston Children's ambulatory center in Weymouth has provided some essential support to our community. Sparing a family the cumbersome drive into Boston, the hours from work, and the scramble for childcare, the satellite office has greatly expanded access throughout our region. It has also been a tremendous resource for our large, diverse immigrant population, ensuring there is culturally competent care within reach.

However, we remain under served and more resources are badly needed. By moving to a larger facility and increasing the number of services and specialties available, Boston Children's Hospital can deliver more care and more access to families.

As a grandfather, a lifelong Brockton resident, and an elected leader in this city, I am proud to support this proposal and urge the Department to expeditiously offer its approval. Please accept my electronic signature applied below.

Very truly yours,

Winthrop Farwell, Jr.

Winthrop H. Farwell, Jr.
Councilor at Large, City of Brockton
Council President

Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

September 7, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program:

My name is Michael Hess and I am the Business Manager of Ironworkers Local 7, I am writing to express my strong support for Boston Children's Hospital's plans to modernize its Waltham and Weymouth facilities and to build a new ambulatory surgical center in Needham. Many of our members have children who have been treated at Boston Children's and see these proposed projects as both an opportunity to create good, union jobs as well as an opportunity to bring Boston Children's services closer to where patient families live.

We applaud the fact that Boston Children's is undertaking these plans in a way that demonstrates its commitment not only to the health and well-being of children in those three communities but to addressing the needs of children and families in surrounding, underserved communities as well. This will ensure that families throughout Massachusetts have access to a full range of high quality, integrated pediatric care services where and when they need it.

I am confident Boston Children's investments in children, families and communities will have a long-lasting impact that will benefit the community for many years to come.

Ironworkers Local 7 appreciates the opportunity to provide this letter of support for Boston Children's proposed project. We strongly urge the Department of Public Health to act favorably on it.

Sincerely,

Michael Hess
Business Manager
Ironworkers Local 7

PIPEFITTERS' ASSOCIATION

Local Union 537

ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER

PAUL R. CAMPBELL

BUSINESS AGENTS

JAMES M. O'BRIEN

DANIEL T. O'BRIEN

REFRIGERATION DIVISION

BRIAN A. NICHOLSON

40 Enterprise Street, Suite 420

Dorchester, MA 02125

~ Fax: 617-787-5373

BUSINESS MANAGER/FINANCIAL SECRETARY TREASURER

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DANIEL E. COADY

VICE PRESIDENT

RYAN J. GILLIGAN

ORGANIZER

CHRISTOPHER J. BRENNAN

Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

~~September 14, 2021~~
September 9, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program:

My name is Thomas P. Kerr, Jr. and I am the Business Manger Financial Secretary/Treasurer of Pipefitters' Association Local Union 537. I am writing to express my strong support for Boston Children's Hospital's plans to modernize its Waltham and Weymouth facilities and to build a new ambulatory surgical center in Needham. Many of our members have children who have been treated at Boston Children's and see these proposed projects as both an opportunity to create good, union jobs as well as an opportunity to bring Boston Children's services closer to where patient families live.

We applaud the fact that Boston Children's is undertaking these plans in a way that demonstrates its commitment not only to the health and well-being of children in those three communities but to addressing the needs of children and families in surrounding underserved communities as well. This will ensure that families throughout Massachusetts have access to a full range of high quality, integrated pediatric care services where and when they need it.

I am confident Boston Children's investments in children, families and communities will have a long-lasting impact that will benefit the community for many years to come.

Pipefitters' Association Local Union 537 appreciates the opportunity to provide this letter of support for Boston Children's proposed project. We strongly urge the Department of Public Health to act favorably on it.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Kerr, Jr.
Business Manager/FST



Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

September 1, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program,

We are writing to express the support of the Children's Mental Health Campaign (CMHC) for Boston Children's Hospital's proposal "The Children's Medical Center Corporation BCH-21071411-HE DoN Application" to modernize its existing facilities in Waltham and Weymouth and build an ambulatory surgical center in Needham.

Established in 2006, the CMHC is a large statewide network that advocates for policy, systems and practice solutions to ensure that all children in Massachusetts have access to resources to prevent, diagnose and treat mental health issues in a timely, effective and compassionate way. This recommendation is offered on behalf of four members of CMHC Executive Committee, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, The Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, The Parent Professional Advocacy League, and Health Law Advocates. The other members are Health Care for All and the applicant, Boston Children's Hospital. We believe strongly that this project will greatly benefit children, families, and communities across our state and improve access for patients seeking life-saving or life-changing care.

Boston Children's Hospital (BCH) is a true treasure. It is a world class hospital with unparalleled experience and expertise in treating all aspects of child health and well-being. It is also a trusted and effective advocacy partner at the national, state, municipal and neighborhood level. Their contributions of time, talent and resources are at the core of every CMHC success. They include passage of measures to: improve transparency and accountability in access to coverage for behavioral health and to support integration of primary care and behavioral health; a comprehensive reform of the former CHINS System; mandated screening and intervention for adolescent substance misuse; and state budget appropriations for key services including the MA Child Psychiatry Access Project, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, and bridge services for children returning to school after an extended hospitalization. BCH is also a driving force behind our current efforts to improve policy, systems and services to alleviate long waits for inpatient and residential psychiatric care, advance implementation of models of pediatric behavioral health urgent care, improve access to school based behavioral health services and support behavioral health workforce development initiatives.

There is a mental health crisis in Massachusetts and nationally. Demand is seriously overwhelming supply, resulting in long waits for services even among children in acute crisis.

The new inpatient psychiatric unit for children underway in Waltham will provide much needed capacity in a system that is overtaxed, providing desperately needed high-quality treatment to seriously ill children. In addition, the proposed projects and investments will help Boston Children's grow their impact in other important ways, ensuring that patients and families have access to a full range of high quality, integrated pediatric care services in convenient, lower-cost settings. We are particularly pleased at the addition of a psychiatric day program for children with medical complexities and mental illness. This service will fill a substantial gap in the system of care which currently causes these children to wait for very long periods of time, often in less than ideal settings, for appropriate care.

We are confident Boston Children's growing investments in children, families and communities will have a long-lasting impact and benefit future generations of children for many years and we encourage your support of their proposal.

Thank you for accepting this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lambert, Executive Director, Parent Professional Advocacy League
Danna Mauch, President and CEO, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health
Mary McGeown, Executive Director MSPCC
Matt Selig, Executive Director Health Law Advocates

Determination of Need Program
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

September 08, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program,

I'm writing today to voice strong support for Boston Children's Hospital's proposed expansion plans for Weymouth, Needham and Waltham. Based on my experience, I know that increasing access to the care and compassion that Boston Children's provides is one of the single best things Massachusetts could do for families that live in this state, and beyond.

I am a mother of three. My middle son, Bryton, was diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA) when he was two and a half years old. JRA is a painful and persistent autoimmune condition that requires careful attention. For my son, it is accompanied by uveitis – or eye inflammation – that can be equally as difficult to manage. To keep Bryton comfortable and healthy, we have had to rely on constant and evolving medical care.

Luckily for us, Boston Children's makes this possible. We have the best possible provider at the helm of Bryton's care in Dr. James Mantagos. He has been with us throughout this journey and made us feel like we have someone not just treating Bryton but advocating for him. We have a rheumatologist and neurologist we love and trust. All of the doctors and specialists who support us work in close coordination and communication, making our path easier to navigate wherever and however they can. For any parent of a child with a chronic condition, this is a bit of grace that makes it possible to get through even the toughest days.

There is no question in my mind that Boston Children's needs more capacity across the state so that both new and existing patients have more access to their care. The Weymouth facility has been a tremendous asset to our family. But with limited space, our doctors can't always be there and there are often longer waits, which can be hard with little ones. Sometimes our speciality needs have sent us on the two-hour drive out to Waltham, from Plymouth where we live, for an appointment as short as 15 minutes. We are grateful for the care and would stop at nothing to ensure our son has access to the team that has been with him from the start. But expanding current facilities and creating new ambulatory centers would be an enormous help to the children and families that Boston Children's serves, many of whom are facing some of the most heart-wrenching health challenges imaginable.

Bryton is ten now. We are working hard to find a medication that can be a better umbrella for his range of symptoms. We are evolving his care plan as he grows up and constantly adjusting as needed to give him the highest possible quality of life. He is a bright and brilliant kid with a big future ahead of him. We know that Boston Children's is a huge part of the reason why.

Sincerely,

Katherine Coe

Katherine Coe
Plymouth, MA

Determination of Need Program
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

September 8, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program,

I write today to voice my strong support for Boston Children's Hospital's proposed expansion plans throughout Massachusetts. I write as the hospital's Family Partnerships Coordinator and a current member of the Family Advisory Council. Most importantly, I write as a mom.

My beautiful twin girls, Sophie and Maddie, were born at 27 weeks gestation. That's around the time when most parents, especially first-time ones, are just starting to prepare for arrival. They are just starting to realize it's time to pick out the stroller, clear out the nursery, and think about childcare. They are just starting to realize that in a few short months, absolutely everything will change. My husband and I had bought a house in Boston at that time and were preparing for a move from New York City before the twins were born. Life, it turns out, had other plans.

At 27 weeks, they were born with severe and multiple complications associated with prematurity. Sophie spent four months in the ICU; Maddie spent eight. We completed our move to Boston as soon as it was medically safe, with Maddie still in the ICU. To say that Boston Children's was a life-saver feels like an understatement. They ensured my girls survived. They helped and held us through every terrifying intervention, especially in the early days, when their lives felt so precarious and the burden of this on their little bodies was nearly too much to bear.

Over the past 13 years, the girls have had 11 surgeries between them and require intensive, ongoing care for complex and chronic illness. They have been cared for by over 25 specialty clinics at Boston Children's, with additional, outside specialized therapies. Today, at 13 years old, they continue to be cared for by 17 specialties, requiring a level of coordination and attention that would be unfathomable at other medical centers. For Boston Children's, however, this is just what they do. Here's the other thing to know about my girls: They are ok. They are strong. They are brave and beautiful and remarkable beyond measure.

Any parent raising a child with complex medical needs knows the excruciating effort it takes to balance real life with medical life. It is as constant as it is complicated. How do we raise our kids with as much "normalcy" and as much access to the precious moments of childhood as we can – while ensuring they stay healthy, safe and well? This is why access to satellite care is more than a convenience; it is a life-changer. And this is why I know that expanding and improving Boston Children's satellite facilities is one of the best things this Commonwealth can do for its families.

In 2020, Maddie and Sophie had around 70 medical appointments in total. That is a lot of missed school. A lot of time spent in a car, in a waiting room, in a doctor's office, instead of in a classroom, on the playing field, at a friend's house, or just hanging out at home. That is a lot of anxiety around missed social opportunities at a time when their social development could not be

more front of mind for them or us. “Missing out” can do a number on a young girl working to find sure footing and a sense of self in a society that makes that really hard – for even the healthiest kid.

But access to satellite facilities has allowed my girls to remain real people. They are not just patients. They are active students, peers, and young women growing into themselves. They are doing more than surviving and more than just growing up – they are finding space to thrive, despite the unbelievable challenges that life has handed them. There are also small nuances in satellite care that may seem trivial to those for whom they are not essential. But for any parent or child navigating a situation like ours, they are sacred. The satellite offices are smaller. They are cozier. They are intimate and comfortable in a way that even the very best hospital cannot be. The impact of this community environment on kids who have been made to feel like guinea pigs more often than they should is hard to put into words. It is a salve on little hearts.

For our family, we know this is a forever journey. There will not be a point in Maddie and Sophie’s lives when they will not need consistent, multi-faceted care. We are thankfully at the point where we are not spending every waking moment trying to keep them alive. We have learned to breathe again. It feels like a luxury though it surely should not. We are now focused, together, as a family, on helping them grow into fantastic, confident young adults and, critically, into equal partners in their own care. Like every family in a situation akin to ours, *accessibility* in medical care is our North Star. It is the thing that determines not only our girls’ health and safety but their quality of life, freedom, and opportunity to thrive.

With this in mind, I urge the Department to approve Boston Children’s expansion plans and give more families access to the treatment, care, and compassion that my family was lucky to find.

Best,

Katie Litterer
Family Partnerships Coordinator
Office of Experience
Boston Children’s Hospital

September 8, 2021

Massachusetts Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02108

RE: The Children's Medical Center Corporation BCH-21071411-HE DoN Application

To Whom it May Concern:

As parents of two children who live in Arlington, MA – one of whom has Down syndrome – we would like to take this opportunity to urge you to support the Determination of Need Application for Boston Children's Hospital to renovate and equip the existing facility in Waltham, MA; to acquire, construct, fit-out and equip a new facility in Needham, MA; and to lease, construct, fit-out, and equip a new facility in Weymouth, MA.

Since the birth of our first daughter in 2009, we have been patients who have utilized Boston Children's Hospital facilities here in the suburbs. They have provided us with convenient access to timely care from the birth of our first child. Our oldest daughter had a tied tongue that inhibited her ability to receive nutrition appropriately just after birth. After arriving home with our daughter, we immediately worked with our local pediatrician to set up an appointment for oral surgery at the BCH Waltham campus. This appointment allowed us to remain close-by in the suburbs for surgery for our newborn and avoided an additional stressful trip for new tired parents into downtown Boston for medical care. We thereby avoided additional tolls and parking and saved additional time by not having to drive into the city.

As we understand the application of Boston Children's Hospital, the purpose of these projects recognizes that travel to the Longwood Medical Area presents a challenge for many families seeking ambulatory procedures. The reduction of financial and temporal barriers to care is so critically important to our family, as our youngest daughter has Down syndrome and is in her third year of elementary school. Having Boston Children's Hospital locations here in the suburbs considerably cuts down on the time necessary to access so many of our daughter's services. Our daughter has all her medical services coordinated through the Down syndrome clinic at BCH and the clinic works with our local pediatrician to ensure that our daughter's medications for ADHD are appropriate and timed for focus during school hours. Among the medical clinics here in the suburbs, our daughter has received cardiology exams, phlebotomy lab draws, urology care and monitoring due to pre-natal diagnosed hydronephrosis, ear-nose-and throat exams, and audiology testing and monitoring all at the Lexington facility. We've also done evaluations for assistive communication at the Waltham campus in addition to accessing eyeglasses and orthotics to say nothing of the incredible radiology visits at the Waltham facility

when our oldest daughter hurt her arm playing youth sports. Both of these facilities are within a short 10-15 minute drive to our home. This is in great contrast to the at-least one hour drive into downtown Boston to access care at Boston Children's Longwood Medical Area facility. These facilities in the suburbs allow us to remain close-by to our homes and schools – and our children do not need to take time out of school for these appointments for travel because these facilities are so close-by. Since we have now lost significant time in school due to the COVID pandemic, it is critically important that access to healthcare services preserves as much time in school for our children as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this Determination of Need Application for Boston Children's Hospital for the renovation and expansion of facilities and access to care here in our suburbs. Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us at the contact information below.

Sincerely,

Tracy Scatterday & Adam Delmolino
170 Newport Street
Arlington, MA 02476


Tms51874@hotmail.com

Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

~~August 1, 2021~~

September 2, 2021

Dear Determination of Need Program,

I am writing to support Boston Children's Hospital's proposal to modernize its existing facilities in Waltham and Weymouth and build an ambulatory surgical center in Needham. I believe these projects will greatly benefit children, families, and communities across our state and improve access for patients seeking lifesaving or life-changing care. The proposed projects and investments will help Boston Children's grow this impact and reach even more families and more patients, clearly demonstrating the hospital's commitment to the health and well-being of children throughout Massachusetts. These projects will ensure that patients and families have access to a full range of high quality, integrated pediatric care services in convenient, lower-cost settings. In addition, they will meet the needs of surrounding underserved communities.

The Southfield Neighborhood Association represents residents and homeowners of Union Point, a growing planned community located in South Weymouth. Many people have chosen to live in this area due to the close- proximity of excellent health care. Expanding Boston Children's services in Weymouth to include cardiac testing, phlebotomy, radiology, audiology, speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy will help patients and their families save time by avoiding traffic and congestion of commuting into the main hospital facility in downtown Boston.

I am confident Boston Children's growing investments in children, families and communities will have a long-lasting impact and benefit future generations of children for many years.

Thank you for accepting this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Heidi Anderson
President, Southfield Neighborhood Association
2 Dorset Park Lane
Weymouth, MA 02190
snaheidi@gmail.com

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SENIOR SUPERVISING ATTORNEY
Rebecca Wilson
PARALEGAL

September 5, 2021

Determination of Need Program
MA Department of Public Health
250 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Determination of Need Program,

My name is Matt Selig and I serve as the Executive Director of Health Law Advocates (HLA). I am writing to support The Children's Medical Center Corporation's DoN Application No. BCH-20171411-HE. HLA urges the DoN program to approve this application because it will significantly improve access to behavioral health services for children, a top priority for our organization.

HLA is a public interest, non-profit law firm founded in 1996. Our mission is to improve access to health care for Massachusetts residents with low-incomes. HLA's largest program is our Mental Health Advocacy Program for Kids (MHAP for Kids). MHAP for Kids embeds attorneys in Family Resource Centers across the state who provide pro bono legal assistance to families needing legal help to access behavioral health services for children. MHAP for Kids represents more than 500 such families each year.

HLA established MHAP for Kids because of the longstanding and pervasive barriers to behavioral health services for children in our state. A study¹ published in JAMA Pediatrics in February of 2019 found that approximately 25% of children in Massachusetts have a mental health disorder and that approximately 50% of these children do not receive treatment for those conditions. This means that, at the time of the study, one in eight children in Massachusetts lacked access to treatment for a mental illness.

This crisis has grown significantly worse due to the pandemic. COVID-19 has dramatically increased mental illness among children and our state's pediatric mental health system has been increasingly overwhelmed as a result. As the Boston Globe recently reported, "COVID has spawned a mental health crisis that has brought staggering numbers of children and adults to emergency departments seeking help — only to languish for days or weeks before they receive psychiatric treatment to help them heal.

¹ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2724377>

There aren't enough beds or workers to treat all the patients in need, and the demand is overwhelming the health care system.”²

HLA can attest to the increasing demand for behavioral health services for children as well as the rising obstacles to these services. Through our experience working closely with hundreds of families each year, our attorneys see close up how our state's behavioral health system is failing children and their families. This failure is causing long-term harm to children, their families, and our communities.

Boston Children's Hospital's (BCH) planned addition of a 12-bed inpatient psychiatric unit in Waltham along with a partial hospitalization program and some outpatient psychiatric services at that location will provide desperately-needed and high-quality services for our pediatric mental health system. The addition of these services will help alleviate the children's mental health crisis our state's families are experiencing.

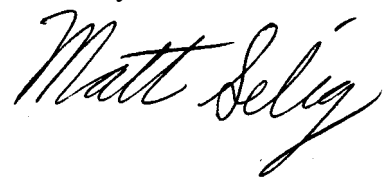
I also wish to recognize BCH's exemplary efforts to reduce the need for acute behavioral health services for youth. BCH and HLA have collaborated in numerous ways over many years to protect children's mental health so they do not require inpatient, or almost as intensive, behavioral health services. BCH has dedicated extensive staff resources and expertise as an Executive Committee member of the Children's Mental Health Campaign (CMHC) for more than a decade and a half along with HLA and a small group of fellow non-profit organizations. Through the CMHC, BCH had strongly advocated for public policies to strengthen our state's vital community-based, including school-based, mental health services for youth.

BCH and HLA's partnership history also includes a multi-year effort launched in 2009 to reduce the incidence of children boarding in hospital beds due to lack of access to community-based care. BCH and HLA also recently formed a partnership in which we are jointly assessing barriers to mental health care facing children enrolled in BCH's accountable care organization. Our partnership is designed to develop strategies to protect children's mental health, reduce children's need for hospital-level mental health care, and reduce the cost of such care for youth. HLA extensive experience working alongside BCH for many years has demonstrated BCH's commitment to addressing children's mental health “upstream” to prevent hospitalizations whenever possible.

Because of the significantly positive impact of Boston Children's Hospital's proposal on children with mental health needs, I urge the Determination of Need program grant this proposal its approval.

Thank you for considering this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matt Selig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Matt Selig
Executive Director
selig@hla-inc.org

² <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/08/07/metro/other-covid-crisis-patients-with-mental-illness-are-waiting-overwhelmed-hospitals-treat-them/>

