

KATHLEEN M. RICE
4TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK



COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEES:
RANKING MEMBER, TRANSPORTATION
SECURITY
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1508 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-5516

DISTRICT OFFICE:
300 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 200
GARDEN CITY, NY 11530
(516) 739-3008

WWW.KATHLEENRICE.HOUSE.GOV

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3204

COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

July 5, 2016

Jerome Hatfield
Regional Administrator, Region II
Federal Emergency Management Agency
26 Federal Plaza
New York, NY 10278

RE: South Nassau Communities Hospital Long Beach Medical Arts Pavilion and South Nassau Southwest Addition EA Comments (DR-4085-NY)

Dear Regional Administrator Hatfield,

Thank you for your work to ensure that Long Island, especially the South Shore of Nassau County, recovers from the massive devastation wrought by Superstorm Sandy on our constituents' homes, businesses, and the services upon which they rely. We write today in support of FEMA's environmental assessment of the proposal by South Nassau Communities Hospital (SNCH) to improve the health care facility in Long Beach and their hospital in Oceanside, which also serves Long Beach residents.

As you know, the previous Long Beach Medical Center was struggling financially when Sandy damaged much of the facility beyond repair by the previous owners. SNCH took over the site after bankruptcy proceedings and worked to develop a financially viable plan to reinstate medical services for Long Beach residents. To best serve the community's needs, SNCH has proposed using FEMA funds to improve facilities both in Long Beach and in Oceanside.

We appreciate FEMA's environmental assessment of the viable alternatives to rebuild health care services in Long Beach. As you write, doing nothing is not an option: "the SNCH temporary facility in Long Beach would continue to be vulnerable to damages caused by storm surge. The residents of Long Beach would face potential loss of life." Further, you mention that some have proposed rebuilding a full-service hospital in Long Beach; however, an independent analysis found that option was not viable due to, as you write, "quality of care considerations, financial viability, and the anticipated inability to receive certification by the New York State Health Department for this level of service."

SNCH's proposal to build a Medical Arts Pavilion, establish a permanent emergency department in Long Beach, and improve their hospital in Oceanside is the most viable option to ensure Long Beach residents have access to quality health care now and in the future. SNCH has assessed the specific health care needs of Long Beach and is proposing to put services tailored to those residents in the medical pavilion. In addition, improving the Oceanside facility, which is not only the sole Level II Trauma Center on Nassau's South Shore but also a designated Stroke Center, will better serve both Long Beach and the greater community.



We agree with your finding that “the entire community would benefit from the renovations and mitigation” to both the Long Beach and Oceanside sites with minor impact to either community, and we believe the improvements proposed by SNCH will ensure better access to care than was available to Long Beach residents before Sandy hit. We urge you to finalize your assessment and issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) as soon as possible so that comprehensive health care services can return to Long Beach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rice', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Denise Ford' in a cursive style.

Denise Ford
Nassau County Legislator