

October 29, 2020

To the Illinois Department of Public Health:

I write on behalf of the Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC), a community planning and policy advocacy organization based in Chicago's Chinatown. CBCAC opposes the closing of Mercy Hospital and Medical Center and urges Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health to seek the financial and operational resources necessary to enable Mercy Hospital to continue to serve the residents of the Near South Side.

According to Mercy Hospital's 2016-2018 Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy Report, the hospital serves a diverse population of patients: 56% African American, 26% Caucasians, 16% Hispanic, and more than 2.4% Asian. Between 80% and 90% of the population served by Mercy are economically challenged, underserved, underprivileged, and typically uninsured. The 2.4% figure belies the fact that with its proximity to Chinatown, Mercy is the preferred hospital for many of the typically Limited English Proficiency, low income immigrant families in Chinatown for the past two or three generations. Mercy is also one of a few hospitals and clinics that have Chinese-speaking medical and administrative staff equipped to provide linguistically and culturally appropriate care to the Chinatown community.

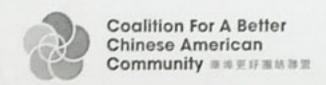
With the impending closure of Cook County's Near South Clinic, which also sees a fair number of low-income, Chinese-speaking patients, many Chinese American residents in the Near South area will have to travel longer distances to seek primary and specialty care. Many Chinatown residents are understandably concerned. CBCAC circulated a petition in the heart of Chinatown on Saturday, October 14, 2020 and collected a total of 187 signatures in approximately two hours. The 19 pages of signatures are attached.

Sincerely,

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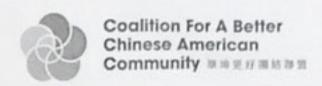
Executive Director, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community





Mercy Hospital opened in 1852 and is Chicago's oldest hospital. Many Chinese American families living in and near Chinatown have used Mercy Hospital over the years because it is the closest hospital to Chinatown and has Chinese-speaking medical and administrative staff. In July, the Hospital announced that it will close by May 2021. We want to stop Mercy Hospital from closing.

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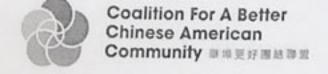
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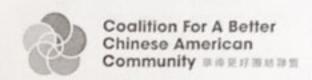
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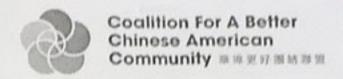
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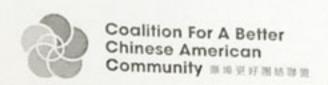
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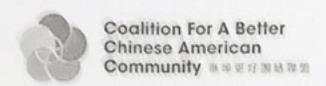
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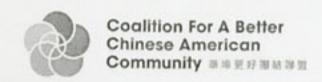
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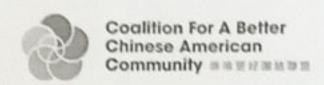
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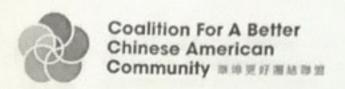
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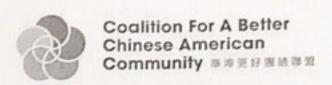
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