

GUY RESCIENTHALER

CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP
14TH DISTRICT, PENNSYLVANIA

RULES COMMITTEE

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

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January 30, 2024

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The Honorable Lina M. Khan
Chair
Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20580

Dear Chair Khan,

I write regarding the proposed integration and affiliation of Washington Health Care Services and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). As the representative of Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District, I strongly support UPMC's proposed affiliation and investment in Washington Health System (WHS), which will be critical to my constituents' access to quality, affordable healthcare.

Rural hospitals across our nation face significant challenges, such as massive deficits driven by lower occupancy rates, increasing inflation and insurance costs, and reduced reimbursement rates. These same challenges are currently impacting WHS. Without structural change and outside investment, their ability to maintain the same levels of care and services would be severely impacted and could lead to the closure of the health system.

Given these hurdles, WHS conducted an open and transparent search to identify affiliates that could invest and keep WHS open for their patients. After careful review, I applaud UPMC's commitment to investing \$300 million in capital and continuing critical WHS services, including women's health, cardiac surgery, internal medicine, surgery, and other clinical services. They will also maintain WHS as an inpatient acute care general hospital with core services like emergency, diagnostic, ambulatory, and primary care. Additionally, UPMC will honor collective bargaining agreements at WHS and has assured my constituents that it will not interrupt access to care or force patients to switch or convert their insurance.

As the Commission works to protect consumer choice and competition in the marketplace, I urge you to support WHS's affiliation with UPMC. This investment in southwestern Pennsylvania's economy will increase job growth, access to care, and continued involvement in our local communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important issue impacting my constituents. Should you have any questions or follow-up, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Guy Rescenthaler".

Guy Rescenthaler
Member of Congress