

Public Comments

The [Health Care Market Oversight](#) (HCMO) program reviews proposed health care business deals to make sure they do not harm people and communities in Oregon. This document presents public comments related to the HCMO review of 035 St. Charles- The Center. OHA accepted public comments during the preliminary review period. Public comments were received via email to hcmo.info@oha.oregon.gov, voicemail, or by filling out the [Public Comment Form](#). Comments are presented below in the order received and may include typos or misspellings. Personal contact information for individuals has been removed.

OHA expresses no views on the substance of these comments, and their publication does not constitute an endorsement by OHA of the views expressed.

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1. No subject, 09/24/2024

Might be to my benefit and help communication gap between orthopedic and bend my clavicle is malformed from fractures in is not joined causing pain and difficulties in daily activities. [Personal information removed]

2. No subject, 9/26/2024

As a Redmond and Deschutes County resident, these are my personal views and should not be taken or construed in any way as the views of my employer; or any other person, party, or entity.

I am in favor of the St. Charles Health Systems purchase of ""The Center"", but have significant reservations. Central Oregon is in a difficult healthcare position right now. St. Charles holds a monopoly on hospital services, there are no other hospitals in the region besides St. Charles. St. Charles also has a large clinic

network but there are several other non-St. Charles clinic systems providing primary and specialty care in the greater Central Oregon region. Still, the more specialized the care you need, the harder it is to find a specialist in Central Oregon. Options remain very limited and lead to personal travel to Portland, Salem, or Eugene for certain types of specialist care. Waits to get in to see existing general practice and specialist providers can be for prolonged periods of time, due to the lack of providers in our region.

Add in the venture capitalist and for-profit entities who have moved into our area, purchasing clinics and providers offices. It leads to a situation where primary care is hard to obtain and specialty care results in long waits, when it is available in our region.

I can't say if the St. Charles purchase of "The Center" will stabilize the specialist care environment in Central Oregon, but like the old black and white movie of a man plugging holes in a dam with his fingers, the proposed purchase will at least slow the exodus of orthopedic and trauma specialty providers in the region.

It also stabilizes the trauma care of the region, as St. Charles Medical Center Bend is the ONLY Level II Trauma Center east of the cascade mountains. My career as a Paramedic taught me that time to surgery is a significant contributor towards morbidity and mortality in trauma patients. Time to advanced medical care and surgery is crucial to trauma survival and chances for trauma recovery.

While I would prefer that St. Charles did not hold a monopoly in the region and another hospital and clinic system were here to provide competition to improve the quality and service levels of care in the region, I will take a St. Charles monopoly including a purchase of "The Center" over the alternative of having fewer specialists, lower levels of Trauma related care, and an increase of for-profit and venture capitalist owned provider offices acting as vultures, picking the remaining quality from the system like picking meat from a carcass.

More competition is always better, except when it is not. Without significant changes to the healthcare system in Central Oregon, the best course of action is for St. Charles to attempt a degree of stabilization of specialty practice through purchase of "The Center"

Jason Herring

About HCMO

The Healthcare Market Oversight Program reviews proposed health care business deals to make sure they support statewide goals related to cost, equity, access, and quality. For more info, you can connect with HCMO staff:

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