

William G. Brooks

Mayor – City of Belle Isle • Advocate – Children’s Tumor Foundation

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Dear Community Leaders:

Myregion.org reports this seven-county region will double from today’s 3.5 million citizens to 7.2 million in 2050. Central Florida is well underway with discussions concerning regional approaches to dealing with growth, but we should not only address transportation, arts, sports and school facilities for the future, but health care as well. We cannot bury our heads in the sand, believing that the region’s present children’s medical facilities are sufficient, and hoping growth doesn’t come.

But growth is not the only reason there will be enough kids to support a new, state of the art Nemours Children’s Hospital.

As a parent of a special needs child, I can tell you that the facilities or physicians presently in our region cannot meet the medical needs of many of our region’s children. Due to complex medical issues which cannot be addressed locally, many children must be treated out-of-state, at world-renowned hospitals that attract top doctors and researchers. While our region’s facilities can wonderfully deal with many common and serious issues alike, there are still many they cannot. What Nemours brings is not just more beds, but a global resource and name in medical research and treatment as well as \$4 billion in support for a \$300 million facility. This will not only bring the opportunity for many seriously ill or afflicted local children to be treated in our community, but will be attractive to patients outside our region who, like our region’s children today, require services not currently offered in their respective hometowns.

Nemours’ research concluded that Central Florida is fertile ground for its facility and services. As many newspaper articles have stated, Nemours requires no “multimillion dollar incentive package.” Nemours is committed to pay to attract top physicians to meet the unique medical needs of its patients. These same articles also observe that Nemours “meshes nicely with the new UCF medical school.” The free market will clearly benefit pediatric care in the region. These ARE the high paying jobs that would benefit Central Florida, and we should be embracing the opportunity to publicly support Nemours.

There are plenty of pediatric specialists in the industry to staff these hospitals. Competition will lead to our region joining the list of world class medical destinations where doctors and technicians, nurses, researchers and suppliers can expect to work in a region that knows what it takes to be globally competitive in medicine.

This region’s competitive edge depends on more than innovative roads, schools, sports and performing arts facilities. While all of those are vitally important, it also requires a visionary approach toward developing new hospitals and increasing the standard of service and care in the region’s medical facilities. We should not stop and breathe a sigh of relief as if our future needs have now been met by the addition of the wonderful new Winnie Palmer Hospital. A tremendous victory for women and babies? Absolutely! The long term solution? Not entirely... To date only 48 percent of pediatric health care needs in Central Florida are being achieved by the two community hospitals. We need to provide services to the other 52 percent of children, allowing them to have integrated healthcare within the region where they live.

It is time for this region’s leadership to publicly support Nemours Children’s Hospital. Let’s start acting like a region. Children’s lives depend on it.

Sincerely,



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