



Gifford Health Care • Gifford Medical Center • Gifford Retirement Community
802-728-7000 • giffordhealthcare.org

May 24, 2023

Mr. Owen Foster, Chair
Green Mountain Care Board
144 State St.
Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Chair Foster,

On behalf of the Gifford Board of Directors, thank you for this opportunity to provide public comment on the FY2024 hospital budget guidance.


As the volunteer chair of Gifford's board, active member of the Rochester community, and retired health care administrator, I am well versed in the intricacies of health care budgeting and the turbulent environment we function in on a daily basis. It is the board's fiduciary responsibility to review and approve a budget that ensures Gifford's financial health, safeguards its ability to care for the community, and meets its obligations to lenders. This budget must have an operating margin to meet these obligations.

Gifford, a small hospital, has been nimble and responsive to the changing health care environment. Hospital leadership is well connected to the communities served by Gifford to understand the evolving needs of Gifford patients. Our community gem is lean in terms of workforce, savvy on contract negotiations, and thoughtful with capital purchases. However, with the proposed budget guidance, there is little room to invest back into our facilities and our people. Subsequently, Gifford, like other hospitals, will suffer. Our patients will suffer.

The guidance presents a dilemma to our board: With the NPR growth target, how do we support our health care workers with needed technology upgrades, ongoing capital improvements, and salaries? We are conflicted between regulatory duty to adhere to the GMCB's guidance and our fiduciary responsibility to Gifford and the communities served by Gifford.

Please reconsider the FY2024 hospital budget guidance and enable Gifford to build a sound, responsible, and expertly crafted budget that reflects the needs of our patients and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Victor Ribaudo
Chair, Gifford Board of Directors