

Welch-Willis Pass Legislation to Keep Westlake Hospital Out of Key House Committee



SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – State Rep. Emanuel “Chris” Welch, D-Hillside, helped legislation aimed at blocking the Pipeline Health’s decision to close Westlake Hospital pass out of the House Appropriations-Human Services Committee yesterday.

“As our community stands united against Westlake’s closure, I am fighting in Springfield to examine every avenue possible to keep

Westlake open,” Welch said. “This proposal will help stop Pipeline’s misguided decision that would decimate care for families in our neighborhoods.”

The Welch-sponsored House Bill 123 requires additional documentation and permitting to close a hospital and gives the governor the ability to reverse a decision made to permit the closure of a hospital by the Health Facilities Services Review Board (HFSRB). The proposal passed out of committee this week and awaits further action on the House floor.

Pipeline Health finalized the purchase of a three-hospital system that included Westlake Hospital earlier this year. Recently, Pipeline Health made the decision to begin the process to close Westlake Hospital, causing a major pushback from local officials and residents who felt blindsided by Pipeline’s decision. The prospect of closing any hospital in the system was not approached during the negotiations of the purchase of the health care system and Pipeline even pledged to turn around the financially struggling facilities.

“While passing this proposal out of committee was another positive step, our community’s fight continues,” Welch said. “We must remain vigilant and continue our efforts to keep Westlake open.”

Welch is encouraging local residents to send a letter opposing Westlake’s closure to the Health Facilities and Services Review Board, located at 525 W. Jefferson St. in Springfield. Welch’s office has a template letter that residents may sign. To receive a copy of the letter contact Welch’s office by phone at 708-450-1000 or by email at repwelch@emanuelchriswelch.com. Additionally, Welch is also encouraging residents to voice their opposition to Westlake’s closure by calling HFSRB at 217-782-3516. All public comments must be received by close of business on April 10.