Good afternoon. My name is Kevin Brennan, Geisinger Health System’s EVP of Finance and CFO, proudly offering these remarks on behalf of Geisinger Health System’s Board of Directors and its CEO, Dr. David Feinberg.

Geisinger is delighted to provide this testimony in support of the application for approval for two prominent and successful not for profit organizations to come together as part of one integrated health services company. Geisinger is committed to building healthier communities together, growing clinical services, expanding health financing solutions and keeping care delivered locally.

Geisinger’s mission is to enhance the quality of life through an integrated health service organization based on a balanced program of patient care, education, research, and community service. This mission statement has been summarized into four words – “Heal. Teach. Discover. Serve.”

Geisinger Health System had its beginnings in the small community of Danville in central Pennsylvania where, in 1915, Abigail A. Geisinger founded a Hospital in memory of her husband. From the beginning, the new hospital was designed as a comprehensive healthcare institution that would offer specialized medical care to people in the rural areas, led by a multispecialty physician group. Today Geisinger has approximately 21,000 team members, all working toward the common goal established by Abigail Geisinger when she said “Make my hospital right, make it the best”. Those simple words continue to be a powerful motivator.

Today, in this our centennial year, Geisinger Health System continues to be a physician-led, integrated health services organization that has as its main components:

1. An array of health services providers, including six acute care hospitals, an alcohol and chemical dependency treatment facility, and joint sponsorship of a free standing rehabilitation hospital;
2. A multispecialty physician group practice of approximately 1,200 physicians practicing at 139 primary and specialty clinics, training future physicians with 339 residents in 20 independently accredited residencies and 65 fellows in 17 independently accredited fellowships, and a $50 million research program with over 400 faculty and staff.
3. A series of other continuum of care business including nursing homes, home health agencies and both air and ground ambulance services
4. And three health insurance companies, broadly known as Geisinger Health Plans, aggregating to one of the nation’s largest rural health insurance organizations with commercial, Medicare Advantage, Medical Assistance and self-insured insurance products. GHPs offer various solutions in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maine and West Virginia.

Geisinger operates in 44 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties, with a significant presence in central and northeastern Pennsylvania. As of June 30, 2015, Geisinger cared for more than 675,000 unique patients annually and managed nearly 510,000 health plan members, resulting in a unique population managed of over 1 million people. Our New Jersey operations commenced on January 1, 2013 as a partnership with Meridian Health System offering Medicare Advantage products in Ocean and Monmouth counties and now has over 6,000 members.

Geisinger is financially strong generating $4.5 billion of revenue annually and earning a Aa2/AA rating by Moody’s Investor Services and Standard & Poor’s respectively, providing unique capabilities in accessing public markets efficiently.
Geisinger’s volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of prominent leaders from local, regional and national venues, carefully considered all aspects of the proposed merger. Geisinger believes we share similar roots, have a common vision; have a shared commitment to quality, innovation and transformation; and believe we have cultural alignment and therefore, have agreed to maintain local governance control and preserve the strong AtlantiCare brand in the community.

Geisinger Health System has experience in integrating new entities, evidenced by the merging of five hospitals and related companies since 2012, many with varied demographics and challenges, in the towns of Shamokin, Scranton, Bloomsburg, Lewistown and Harrisburg. We have successfully worked with community physicians, including over 2,000 independent providers who have privileges at our various hospitals and community leaders, respecting their past while investing in their future. In Harrisburg, we continue to honor the religious roots and Catholic principles in effect at Holy Spirit Hospital.

Geisinger is a nationally recognized leader in population health, smartly leveraging information technology to improve the health of our patients and members. Our electronic health record, MyChart, has over 270,000 individual active users being provided open access to their medical record and facilitating other self-service health-related tasks. Geisinger also sponsors a regional health information exchange on behalf of 38 care delivery organizations, containing 650,000 patient authorizations to share records.

During the early stages of the debate over the Affordable Care Act, in 2009, President Barack Obama stated “We have to ask why places like the Geisinger Health System in rural Pennsylvania…can offer high quality care at costs well below average…We need to identify the best practices across the country, learn from the success, and replicate that success elsewhere.” The President learned of Geisinger’s focus on innovation and transformation and demonstrated ability to simultaneously improve quality and lower cost. Geisinger’s ProvenCare® initiatives, focused on best practices being delivered to a broad population, including those in acute settings and those suffering from chronic disease, are well documented and are already in the process of being implemented in the AtlantiCare communities. It is this proven success that gives us optimism that we can achieve the Institute for Healthcare Improvements Triple Aim by applying integrated approaches to simultaneously improve care, improve population health and reduce per capita costs.

Geisinger is equally excited about the opportunity to spread the skill set developed by AtlantiCare to earn the Malcolm Baldridge National Quality award in 2009 and to adopt innovative best practices deployed in the operation of their nationally recognized Special Care Center.

Together, the strength of the AtlantiCare regional brand and that of Geisinger’s national expertise in value reengineering, in providing an innovative payer-provider relationship and in scaling and dissemination of innovative models of care delivery, will work to improve the health of the region, provide employers alternative options for employee benefits management, permit more care to be delivered locally and deliver value.

In the end though we recognize we have to earn the people’s trust by caring for people in a way that delivers the highest quality, with exceptional levels of compassion, ensuring phenomenal experiences every time for every patient.

Thank you.