

Statement of Mary Driscoll RN, MPH
Regarding Nomination to the Cook County Health and Hospital System Board

Chairman Suffredin and Commissioners:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee. I am honored to be nominated to serve on the Board of the Cook County Health and Hospital System. As a lifelong resident of Chicago, a nurse, a public health professional, and someone deeply concerned about access to care I appreciate the County system for both its provision of clinical care and its concern for population health. It was my early work in healthcare at a free clinic in Chicago and a Cook County health center in Uptown that taught me the value of the County public health and healthcare system, and, the enduring lesson that good healthcare and public health require a social justice lens.

I have recent experience in the County Health System as the Chief Nursing Officer/Director of Patient Care Services for the then newly created Ambulatory and Community Health Network (ACHN) which was recognition of the importance of ambulatory care to the overall system. During this time ACHN received its first Joint Commission Accreditation, developed quality improvement collaboratives in the various health centers, solidified partnerships with the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's), and created an organized system of specialty referrals to maximize resources. In 2007 I joined the Illinois Department of Public Health to build a Division of Patient Safety and Quality which would use public health and hospital data to promote improvements in healthcare services and public health, provide a framework to look at population health using social determinants, and strengthen the ties between public health and healthcare services. At the Department I also served on the Medicaid Advisory Committee, and the State Health Information Exchange, as well as other Boards and Councils. I have been the recipient of many millions of dollars in grant funds for new and innovative programs and building partnerships to better serve our patients and the general public. These experiences will help make me a productive and knowledgeable board member.

Today we are living in a rapidly changing healthcare environment, much of this due to the Affordable Care Act. The County System has risen to the occasion with the creation of County Care. Now as it continues down the road towards self-sufficiency I am sure challenges remain. As a Board member I can help, particularly in areas of ambulatory care, nursing, quality improvement and patient safety, patient satisfaction, partnerships, and data and informatics. I can bring my health and healthcare experience of 35 plus years outlined above coupled with a social justice framework to best help the system thrive, and serve the public interest on the Cook County Health and Hospital System Board.

Thank You and I am pleased to answer any questions the Commissioners may have.