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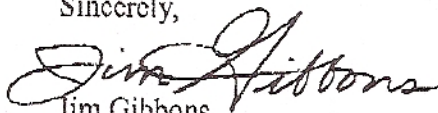
Without question, an acquisition of this size and scope could have significant impacts on both Nevada's healthcare providers and on our consumers. These impacts have not yet been fully explored.

Nevada consumers already face significant challenges in both access to and costs of obtaining health care services. Nevada ranks among the highest in the nation in the percentage of our residents who have no health insurance. In fact, a study released yesterday places Nevada 46th in the nation in terms of health care. The ranking is based on a number of factors, including our uninsured population and our limited access to providers of health care services. Additionally, Nevada has a continual problem in recruiting enough doctors and other medical personnel in critical fields to meet the needs of our growing population.

While I have not yet formed an opinion on the merits of this acquisition, as Governor, I need to ensure that we give the public and health care providers an opportunity to air and discuss concerns about this proposed acquisition. Therefore, I respectfully request that a series of public hearings be held throughout the state of Nevada in order to give all interested parties the opportunity to discuss all possible impacts of this acquisition on our healthcare system.

At a minimum, as Governor, I want to ensure that this acquisition does not result in higher costs to Nevadans.

Sincerely,


Jim Gibbons
Governor of Nevada