



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Federal Trade Commission
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20580

Office of the Secretary

April 11, 2014

Dr. George Robinson
815 Riverbend Drive
Gadsden, AL 35901

Re: *In the Matter of Community Health Systems, Inc., and Health Management Associates, Inc., File No. 131-0202, Docket No. C-4427*

Dear Dr. Robinson:

Thank you for your comments regarding the proposed Consent Order accepted by the Federal Trade Commission for public comment in the above-captioned matter. This letter responds to your comments.

The Commission has placed your comment on the public record pursuant to Rule 4.9(b)(6)(ii) of the Commission's Rules of Practice, 16 C.F.R. § 4.9(b)(6)(ii), and it has been given detailed review. In your comment, you stated that competition between the two Gadsden, Alabama, hospitals is destructive because it causes both hospitals to invest in expensive equipment and physicians, for which there are insufficient patient volumes. You also stated that many hospitals in surrounding communities compete with the Gadsden hospitals. The Commission's investigation found, however, that both Gadsden hospitals offer high-quality care and neither is suffering financially as a result of these investments. CHS's acquisition of HMA, absent the proposed divestiture in Gadsden, would have eliminated direct and substantial competition between the two hospitals that many believed has benefited the community. Likewise, the Commission staff found that the hospitals outside Gadsden do not meaningfully compete with, or serve as substitutes for, the Gadsden hospitals for general acute care inpatient services.

After careful consideration of your comments, the Commission has determined that the public interest would be best served by issuing the Decision and Order as final without modification. We arrived at this decision because the relief obtained pursuant to the order appropriately addresses the competitive concerns arising from the acquisition.

A copy of the final Decision and Order is enclosed for your information. Relevant materials are also available from the Commission's website at <http://www.ftc.gov>.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark
Secretary