



Crain's Health Pulse

Tuesday, February 19, 2013

Protest Against LICH Closing Grows

As state Department of Health officials await an anticipated closing plan for Long Island College Hospital, a coalition of Brooklyn leaders has joined health care unions in asking the state to reconsider its decision to shutter the Cobble Hill facility. For the hospital to close, the State University of New York must file a closing plan with DOH. It was SUNY trustees who voted earlier this month to close the hospital, which SUNY runs. That filing could happen at any time. Meanwhile, in letter sent Feb. 14 to Health Commissioner Dr. Nirav Shah, the protesters said that LICH's closing would be both a blow to care for neighborhood residents and to the local economy. "We are writing to urge you to consider alternative solutions which will keep Long Island College Hospital's vital health care services and jobs in the community," the group wrote. The letter writers called the SUNY decision "premature, irresponsible" and one that "did not allow adequate time to explore other options." The hospital has long lost money. Its real estate, however, has been valued at more than \$500 million. The letter was signed by nine state legislators, as well as Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, union officials, community group representatives and several City Council members.