

1199SEIU & NYSNA React to Gov Hochul's Announcement on Release of Funding To Build New Brooks Memorial Hospital

FREDONIA, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, June 3, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- JOINT STATEMENT FROM 1199SEIU & NYSNA REGARDING THE LONG-AWAITED RELEASE OF \$75 MILLION IN STATE FUNDS TO CONSTRUCT A NEW MODERN BROOKS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL IN NORTHERN CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY



Union members working at the outdated Brooks Memorial Hospital in Dunkirk continued to provide the best care under difficult conditions. Today, following a 7-year-long wait, New York State has finally released the necessary funds to build a new modern Brooks Memorial Hospital to serve the residents of Northern Chautauqua County.

The Governor's announcement today provides renewed hope of keeping access to quality care local. Thanks to Governor Kathy Hochul, thousands of residents will have a new modern facility to receive healthcare in their community for many years to come.

"It's a huge win for the residents of Northern Chautauqua County to maintain access to healthcare close to home," said Tara Walrod, a Radiologic Technologist and 1199SEIU member at Brooks.

The Build Brooks Now campaign to push for release of funding was a grassroots community effort and there are many people to thank including: New York State Senator George Borrello, New York State Assemblyman Andy Goodell, Chautauqua County Legislators, Dunkirk Mayor Kate Wdowiasz, Fredonia Mayor Michael Ferguson, Dunkirk Central Labor Council, WNY Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, Chautauqua County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council, The Seneca Nation and Susan Parker.

"The community has waited seven long years to hear the news that funds would be released to build a new state of the art facility," said Cheryl Marino, 1199SEIU Organizer. "It has been a long journey.

Hospital workers came together to lobby elected officials, organize rallies, hold face-to-face conversations with residents in this community to ensure that this day would happen. The future of this community is bright with the state's release of \$75 million dollars in funding desperately needed to build the new Brooks Memorial Hospital. This rural community will benefit from continued quality care and a truly dedicated healthcare workforce. We have preserved union jobs and maintained local access to essential health care services," said Marino.

"The release of funds to build a new Brooks not only ensures a building that will stand for many years to come but ensures high-quality care for the communities in Chautauqua county – care that all of the healthcare professionals at Brooks have been trained to provide," said Heather Luce, RN, a nurse and NYSNA member at Brooks. "Rural healthcare should not be valued less than healthcare anywhere else, and this funding ensures that the people and families that our state relies on for agriculture and industry can live here, thrive here, and have access to quality healthcare here," said Luce.

In October of last year, hospital workers organized a huge public rally at the hospital's entrance and in March brought the community together for a forum[1] to urge the New York State Department of Health to disperse funding.

On Background:

The plans to build the new facility would cost approximately \$71 million dollars[2]. Brooks-TLC was awarded a \$57 million grant from Essential Healthcare Provider Support Program (EHCPSP) to build a new modern hospital and to convert TLC Lakeshore to an Ambulatory Destination Center specializing in chemical dependency[3]. In addition, the 2017 New York state budget also included a \$17 million dollar Healthcare Facility Transformation grant[4] to help build a modern hospital.

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The New York State Nurses Association represents more than 42,000 members in New York State. We are New York's largest union and professional association for registered nurses. NYSNA is an affiliate of National Nurses United, AFL-CIO, the country's largest and fastest-growing union and professional association of registered nurses, with more than 225,000 members nationwide. www.nysna.org

1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East is the largest and fastest-growing healthcare union in America. We represent over 450,000 nurses and caregivers throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Florida. Our mission is to achieve quality care and good jobs for all. www.1199seiu.org

- [1] [Forum is another call for a new Brooks-TLC | News, Sports, Jobs - Observer Today](#)
- [2] [Brooks-TLC in Dunkirk still pushing for new hospital in Fredonia: 'Our future is in a new building,' CEO says \(buffalonews.com\)](#)
- [3] New York State Electronic Certificate of Need (NYSE-CON), Project Number 172211 (<https://www.health.ny.gov/facilities/cons/nysecon/>)
- [4] [Brooks-TLC Is 'Biggest Issue' In County, Green Says | News, Sports, Jobs - Post Journal \(post-journal.com\)](#)

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