

JUL 29 2011

Good Afternoon,

MEDICAL FACILITIES
PLANNING SECTION

Thank you committee for the opportunity to bring to you the needs for a kidney dialysis center in Macon County.

We believe there are currently approximately 34 Maconians receiving dialysis at this time. This does not account for those folks who have a summer home in Macon County when our population almost doubles nor does it take into account the Macon County residents who live close to the Georgia line and travel to Clayton to be treated.

According to the latest census the average age of residents in Macon County is over 50. Which unfortunately means this problem is likely to increase. But by no means does it mean you have to be elderly to have kidney disease.

I realize as part of the process in calculating the need for a dialysis center is a 30 mile radius. It is my contention and the patients who have to travel this 60 mile or 70 mile round trip. That because of the terrain of the mountains the distance is much more time consuming and difficult than 30 miles driving on interstate 40.

2. Access Basic Principle

Equitable access to timely, clinically appropriate and high quality health care for all the people of North Carolina is a foundational principle. Access barriers of time and distance are especially critical to rural areas and small communities. (illustrations)

The needs of rural and small communities that are distant from comprehensive urban medical facilities merit special consideration. We can't compete with the urban areas of the state and the only way we can meet the needs of our citizens is to ask for special consideration.

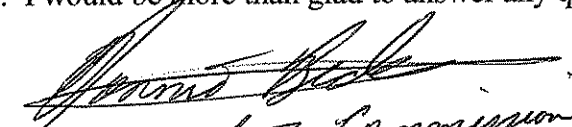
I don't mean it is criticism but as I review the list of members on the Council I don't see much representation from Western North Carolina (one from Asheville, not a very rural area.)

In closing I would ask you to please look at the resolution which was passed unanimously by the Macon County Board of Commissioners:

(Highlight resolution)

You will also find several letters from Macon County citizens which explains in detail problems they encounter traveling at all hours of the day and weather conditions to receive this life saving treatment. I would especially draw attention to the photos attached showing this family trying to cross Cowee Mountain during one of the many snow storms we had this past winter.

Thank you for allowing me the time to present our situation and on behalf of the families who face the need for dialysis in Macon County I urge you to give our request favorable consideration. I would be more than glad to answer any questions the committee has.



Dennis Beck
County Commissioner
Macon County