



## *Graham County Board of County Commissioners*

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August 10, 2016

T. J. Pulliam, MD, Chair  
Long Term Care Committee  
c/o Ms. Paige Bennet, Assistant Chief  
Healthcare Planning  
Division of Health Service Regulation  
2704 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2704

RE: Letter in support of an adjusted need determination to be included in the *2017 State Medical Facilities Plan (SMFP)* for a new dialysis facility in Graham County, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Pulliam,

I am writing this letter to express my steadfast support for the adjusted need determination proposed to be included in the *2017 State Medical Facilities Plan (SMFP)* for a new dialysis facility in Graham County.

An End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) dialysis facility in Graham County will greatly improve the quality of life for residents suffering from ESRD. In my opinion we have ample citizens that require this service and know that over time that number will only increase.

The residents of Graham County, North Carolina, and those on extended visits who need dialysis services to stay alive, must travel substantial times and long distances to surrounding facilities in Sylva, Murphy, Cherokee, or Waynesville, North Carolina. For example, a resident of Robbinsville, Graham County must travel 74 miles, roundtrip, to the dialysis facility in Cherokee, North Carolina or 68 miles, roundtrip, to the facility in Murphy, North Carolina. These are the two closest facilities.

The long drives are not easy. Distances which appear on maps to be but a few miles involve circuitous routes along roads filled with sharp curves and steep grades. The roads through Graham County run through rugged mountainous country and are extremely dangerous when wet or when snow, ice, and / or foggy conditions are present.

These types of hardships have material and negative impacts on quality of life for both Graham residents who need dialysis services and those who assist them in traveling to the dialysis facilities. This is an excellent proposal for a much needed service. I urge the Division of Health Service Regulation to approve the adjusted need determination.

Now is the time for Local and State Government leaders along with leaders in the Dialysis Service Industry to act on behalf of the suffering people in Graham County.

Sincerely,

Jacob D. Nelms, Chairman Graham County Board of Commissioners