

December 15, 2010

SCHIMMINGER SAYS DEGRAFF TO REMAIN OPEN

New York State Assemblyman Robin Schimminger is pleased to join in announcing that the New York State Department of Health has granted DeGraff Memorial Hospital permanent status as an acute care facility, again overturning the 2006 Berger Commission recommendation that directed the hospital to close in 2008 and be turned into a nursing home facility.

“I joined the tough fight for DeGraff to remain open in 2008 and won that battle for a three-year extension to operate as a hospital,” said Schimminger. “As that extension was set to expire in June 2011, I, along with other hospital advocates, appealed once again to the State Health Department for DeGraff to be granted permanent status as an acute care facility. Now, our wish has been granted.”

DeGraff has served the Twin Cities of Western New York for more than 90 years, providing thousands of people annually with a wide array of services. Emergency department volume has increased by 10 percent since 2008, and last week, The Geriatric Center of Western New York moved to DeGraff, specializing in the care of patients older than 70 with medical issues and/or memory loss. Services will expand again when signature programs from Millard Fillmore Gates Circle Hospital, set to close in 2012, are relocated to the North Tonawanda hospital, according to a statement issued by DeGraff Memorial Hospital.

“It would have been a devastating loss to our area had the Health Department not granted DeGraff permanent status as an acute care facility. I am very pleased that the Commissioner of Health saw that closing this hospital would have had adverse affects on the health and well-being of our community,” said Schimminger. “Now, we can say with certainty that DeGraff will continue to serve our community for a long, long time to come.”

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