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Memorandum in Support of A.1148/S.1856 May 2019

*An Act to amend the Public Health Law and New York City health and hospitals corporation act
in relation to hospital community advisory boards*

Health Care for All New York (HCFANY) is a statewide coalition of consumer-focused organizations dedicated to achieving quality, affordable health coverage for all New Yorkers, and ensuring that the concerns of real New Yorkers are heard and reflected in policy conversations. **We support A.1148/S.1856, which would require every general hospital to have a community advisory board that is actively engaged in such activities as ensuring the hospital is meeting the health care needs of the community, providing charity care services and improving access to health services by the underserved.**

As hospitals across the state plan for the future, it is critical that local affected consumers have a say. Under this bill, every general hospital would be required to establish a community advisory board to advise the hospital on such matters as:

- Reviewing and amending the hospital's organizational mission statement, which should set for the hospital's commitment to meeting the health care needs of the community;
- Soliciting the views of the communities served by the hospital regarding the facility's performance and service priorities;
- Demonstrating – through development and issuance of an annual public report — the hospital's operational and financial commitment to providing charity care and improving access to health services by the underserved; and
- The development of any plans or programs of the hospital.

The creation of such community advisory boards is especially important as hospitals across the state consider downsizing, closing or joining large health systems. The boards can help facilitate health system delivery changes that better serve the needs of health care consumers.

For these reasons, HCFANY strongly urges the enactment of this bill.