



The Metropolitan Organization (TMO)



September 22, 2025

Dr. Esmaeil Porsa, MD
Harris Health
4800 Fournace Place
Bellaire, Tx 77401

Dr. Porsa

We are writing to express the strong support of The Metropolitan Organization (TMO) for the efforts of Harris Health to expand the capacity of Ben Taub Hospital to better serve the needs of our community over the next several decades. During the Summer of 2023, before TMO decided to endorse the Harris Health bond election, our leaders discussed their experiences at Harris Health facilities, especially Ben Taub and LBJ Hospitals. The overwhelming response from our diverse base of leaders in congregations throughout the Houston Metropolitan area was that the care at these hospitals was excellent, but the overcrowding was at times excruciating for them and their loved ones.

As a result of these conversations, our leadership decided to endorse and work to pass the bond election. TMO leaders willingly distributed informational flyers at their own congregations and many others, made phone calls and texts to voters in the neighborhoods near their congregations, and walked door to door in certain neighborhoods in support of the bonds. We are gratified to see the new LBJ Hospital already rising in Northeast Houston and look forward to the day that it will begin serving our communities. We know there is a similar need to expand Ben Taub in the future in order meet the needs of our growing county where over 1 million people are uninsured or receive their health coverage from Medicaid or the Affordable Care Act.

While no one likes having to convert public park land into buildings and infrastructure, it is clear that this is the most cost-effective and responsible approach to take. The 8.9 acres you propose to condemn does not affect the use of the primary attractions of Hermann park including the Zoo, Miller Outdoor Theater, playscapes for children, gardens and the golf course. The location of this land across Cambridge Street from the existing Ben Taub means you can build new hospital bed capacity that is located in close proximity to the existing Level One Trauma Center, clinics and other services our community values in Ben Taub.

We wish you all the best and great success as you proceed through this process to renew and strengthen the Harris Health system.

Bishop John Ogletree
First Metropolitan Church,
TMO Clergy Caucus

Bryan Lopez
Assumption Catholic
TMO Executive Committee

Mary Koch
First Unitarian Universalist
TMO Executive Committee