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To Whom It May Concern:

As Board Chair of Mental Health America of Greater Houston (MHA) for several years, and Board Chair of Houston Recovery Center/Sobering Center for the last four years, I am writing to express my strong and full support for Harris Health's proposal to acquire 8.9 acres of land adjacent to Ben Taub Hospital. This expansion is vital to addressing the growing healthcare needs of Harris County, particularly in the field of mental health.

Ben Taub Hospital is a cornerstone of our community's health care safety net and consistently operates at full capacity, including its Psychiatric Unit and Psychiatric Emergency Room. The demand for mental health services in Harris County continues to rise, and the current limitations in space and resources create significant barriers for individuals in crisis who need timely and comprehensive care.

MHA's mission is to promote mental health and ensure access to quality treatment for all. I believe this land acquisition will enable Harris Health to expand its facilities, integrate behavioral health with medical care, and strengthen the continuum of services for those most in need. This investment represents not only an expansion of infrastructure but a commitment to improving health outcomes and building a healthier, more resilient Harris County. Also, Houston Recovery Center/Sobering Center needs a place like Ben Taub and uses its Emergency Room for our patients and their needs, as most of these patients are uninsured and need care.

I commend Harris Health for its leadership and vision and urge city and county leaders to move forward with this proposal. Together, we can ensure that lifesaving mental health services, together with medical care remain accessible to every member of our community.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to the well-being of Harris County residents

Sincerely,

*Asim A. Shah, M.D.*

Board Chair, Mental Health America of Greater Houston  
Board Chair, Houston Recovery Center/Sobering Center