



January 26, 2026

Executive Office of Governor DeSantis
400 S. Monroe Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

As Broward County's leading organization of chief executives and decision-makers representing more than 100 major businesses and professions, the Broward Workshop is committed to advancing solutions to our community's most pressing challenges. Few issues are more critical than ensuring timely access to high-quality, compassionate healthcare for the nearly two million residents who power Broward's economy and quality of life.

For years, families in underserved communities such as Lauderdale Lakes, Pompano Beach, and West Park have faced unacceptable barriers to care. Expectant mothers must travel long distances for prenatal visits; children with complex conditions are often forced to leave the county for specialized treatment; emergency rooms remain too far away; and gaps in behavioral health services compound the daily struggles of working families. These inequities undermine Broward's economic vitality, strain our workforce, and diminish overall quality of life.

It was precisely these challenges that led Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System to launch Better Together, a first-of-its-kind partnership designed to expand access to primary care, maternity and women's health services, chronic disease management, and mobile health services across our county. For the first time, our two public safety-net systems united to ensure that every adult in Broward County can receive timely, coordinated care, regardless of ability to pay. Better Together is already delivering results through expanded clinic capacity and mobile community health teams that bring care directly into high-need neighborhoods.

However, despite the clear benefits to residents, outdated geographic charters and the threat of predatory lawsuits continue to restrict the ability of Broward Health and Memorial to collaborate fully. By contrast, private competitors face no such constraints, giving them greater flexibility to enter and exit markets based solely on profitability. Without legislative action, the Better Together partnership, and the essential services it provides, cannot reach its full potential.

For these reasons, the Broward Workshop strongly urges the Florida Legislature to pass House Bill 1047, introduced by Representative Hillary Cassel, and Senate Bill 1122, introduced by Senator Joe Gruters, this session as a strategic investment in Broward County's long-term economic health and resilience. This legislation does not merge hospitals or consolidate governance; Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System will remain independent public hospital systems with separate boards, operations, and accountability.

This legislation will:

- Protect collaboration between Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System from costly, protracted litigation.
- Allow joint planning, physician-sharing, and coordinated capital investments.
- Ensure both systems can expand services in underserved communities without fear of legal challenge.
- Maintain full transparency, as both systems will continue operating under Florida's Government in the Sunshine Laws.

Importantly, this type of state-action immunity legislation is not new. More than twenty other states have already enacted similar laws, recognizing that public hospital systems must be able to collaborate to meet community needs, and Florida should join them.

With this legislation, Broward's public hospitals will be empowered to:

- Expand maternity, pediatric, and behavioral health services in every corner of the county.
- Recruit and retain top physicians and specialists.
- Deploy mobile health units and community-based clinics into high-need neighborhoods.
- Address socioeconomic disparities, including infant mortality concentrated in specific ZIP codes.
- Ensure more healthcare dollars stay in Broward County — supporting local jobs, employers, and care for residents — rather than being diverted to distant shareholders.

Public safety-net systems cannot walk away from unprofitable but essential services. Collaboration is the only way to guarantee that these services remain available for generations to come.

The Broward Workshop believes that the Better Together collaboration between Broward Health and Memorial Healthcare System is not merely an initiative — it is a necessity. On behalf of the Broward Workshop, which represents more than 95,000 employees in 35 industries in Broward County, we stand united in asking the Legislature to **pass H.B. 1047 and S.B. 1122** without delay. Broward's families, employers, and long-term competitiveness depend on it.

Respectfully,

Tim Petrillo

Tim Petrillo (Jan 27, 2026 11:22:59 EST)

Tim Petrillo, Chair
Broward Workshop