



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR INFORMATION CALL

April 18, 2018

**Ald. Khalif J. Rainey**  
(414) 286-2863

**Ald. Michael Murphy**  
(414) 286-3763

**Ald. Bob Donovan**  
(414) 531-2096

## **Ascension announces pause to service downsizing at St. Joseph**

Just a little more than 24 hours after the Common Council unanimously approved legislation urging Ascension Wisconsin to reconsider its plans to reduce services in the City of Milwaukee, the health care provider this afternoon announced it will pause planned service reductions at Ascension – St. Joseph.

The announcement comes after the Council voted yesterday to urge Ascension Wisconsin to reconsider its plans to reduce services in the city and to establish a one-year moratorium on any downsizing and service reductions at the St. Joseph Campus and its other Milwaukee health care facilities. The Council resolution asked Ascension to “work with community leaders, elected officials and other local stakeholders to find alternatives to service reductions and ways to preserve health care services for Milwaukee residents, particularly in economically distressed areas of the city.”

**Alderman Khalif J. Rainey** – the legislation’s primary sponsor – said he’s pleased by the announcement from Ascension (see the **attached statement** from Ascension Senior Vice President Bernie Sherry). “I am heartened by this pause on the plans to downsize services at St. Joseph – it shows Ascension’s willingness to listen and engage the Common Council, the mayor and the community,” he said. “I look forward to further discussions and finding ways to keep the vital services in place at St. Joseph and the other Ascension facilities in Milwaukee.”

**-More-**

## **Ascension announces pause/ADD ONE**

“I commend Ascension for this latest development to pause reduction of services,” said **Alderman Michael J. Murphy**. “This shows what an engaged community and its leaders can do when unified on an important issue. I would hope the company continues to listen to community input until a final decision on services is reached.”

Co-sponsors of the legislation approved Tuesday are Aldermen **Michael J. Murphy, Jim Bohl, Cavalier Johnson, Bob Donovan, Mark A. Borkowski, Robert J. Bauman, Nik Kovac, Russell W. Stamper, II, Terry L. Witkowski, Tony Zielinski, José G. Pérez,** and **Alderwoman Chantia Lewis**.

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200 EAST WELLS STREET -- MILWAUKEE, WI -- 53202-8570 -- (414) 264-0235



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**Media Contact:** Caryn Kaufman  
Director, Communications  
Ascension Wisconsin  
[caryn.kaufman@ascension.org](mailto:caryn.kaufman@ascension.org)

O: (414) 465-3005 / C: (646) 765-6006

## **Ascension Wisconsin Statement re: Ascension St. Joseph Hospital**

**MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin – April 18, 2018** – Ascension Wisconsin issued the following statement from Bernie Sherry, Senior Vice President, Ascension Healthcare, Ministry Market Executive, Ascension Wisconsin:

“Over the last two weeks, we’ve been meeting with city leaders and residents and we’ve had great dialogue about Ascension St. Joseph Hospital. We’ve heard how important Ascension is to Milwaukee in providing healthcare to our most vulnerable neighbors. That is, and always has been, our Mission. It is work we are privileged to do.

Based on the feedback we’ve received from the mayor, Common Council members, community leaders and others, we have decided to pause our plan to reconfigure medical services from St. Joe’s to Columbia St. Mary’s Milwaukee as we continue to engage stakeholders on transforming healthcare in Milwaukee. We’re gratified that the Common Council recognizes our role as critical, frontline care institutions. With three city hospitals – Ascension St. Joseph, Ascension Columbia St. Mary’s Milwaukee and Ascension St. Francis – we are Milwaukee’s safety net hospital system. We provide 100% access, regardless of a patient’s ability to pay. We’re proud of that and we remain committed to that. We have served Milwaukee for over a century and we look forward to providing personalized, compassionate care for many generations to come.”

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### **About Ascension Wisconsin**

In Wisconsin, Ascension operates 23 hospitals, more than 100 related healthcare facilities and employs more than 1,300 primary and specialty care clinicians from Racine to Eagle River. Across the state, Ascension provided more than \$257 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty in Fiscal Year 2017. Serving Wisconsin for 170 years, Ascension is a faith-based healthcare organization committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. Ascension is the largest non-profit health system in the U.S. and the world’s largest Catholic health system, operating 2,600 sites of care – including 153 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 22 states and the District of Columbia. Visit [ascension.org/wisconsin](http://ascension.org/wisconsin).