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Chicago hospital under investigation. Will Lancaster General be next?

NEW YORK TIMES: When the Evanston Northwestern Healthcare Corporation merged its two hospitals with the neighboring Highland Park Hospital just north of Chicago 13 years ago, the deal was presented as an opportunity to increase efficiency and improve the quality of patient care.

But when the Federal Trade Commission finally decided to look at the deal, it encountered an entirely different objective: to gain market power...

It was a great deal for the hospitals. The fees they charged to insurers soared. One insurer, UniCare,

said it had to accept a jump of 7 to 30 percent for its health maintenance organizations and 80 percent for its preferred provider organizations... [\(more\)](#)

EDITOR: *Lancaster General Health should be subject to the same scrutiny given its expansion into virtually all areas of health care in Lancaster County and its growing monopolistic influence over the market place.*

When the insurance companies are charged more, they pass on their added costs to the policy holders.

Why are PA officials always being probed?

PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS Column:

* The seat of government is in a small media market and gets little statewide attention. As such, government gets away with more stuff than it should.

* We allow unlimited campaign contributions (only 10 other states are as loose), which feeds greed.

* We're among the worst gerrymandered states in America, which keeps the greedy in office.

* Also, we elect judges at all levels. Only five other states do that. This means unlimited money for judicial campaigns from lawyers and law firms whose cases then go before the very judges their money put in office... [\(more\)](#)

EDITOR: *What John Baer dare not say is that the **Inquirer** and other PA newspapers have cut back on their expenditures and turned their focus to local content. They no longer allow reporters the weeks and sometimes months that are necessary to investigate an important story. Today, reporters must submit two or three articles a week or go out the door.*

Sweeping toxic waste under the carpet?

The Harrisburg Authority is in negotiations to sell its long-financially and environmentally plagued incinerator to the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority, or LCSWMA.

Amid growing concerns that a pre-sale environmental assessment could scuttle or complicate the proposed sale of the Harrisburg incinerator, officials involved in various capacities with the deal appear to be doing their best to ignore or skate around the issue and change the subject.

The unspoken concern is that a thorough environmental assessment has the potential to destroy the planned high-stakes bailout of Harrisburg using Lancaster County bond money. (Who would buy a toxic waste dump?)

That's all the more odd because state law requires an environmental assessment before a permit can be issued for a municipal incinerator...

As we've reported at *NewsLanc*, documents at the state Department of Environmental Protection reveal that Harrisburg city officials for years illegally processed hazardous waste at the incinerator...

INTELLIGENCER JOURNAL

Editorial ["PSU's better option"](#) argues:

"Penn State's best hope for a reconsideration of NCAA-imposed penalties lies in meeting the obligations put forth by the athletic association, not by filing lawsuits to recover its reputation..."

WATCHDOG: We disagree with the *Intell* editors.

In psychiatric terms, we do not advocate 'identifying with the aggressor.'

In years past, among the biggest advocates of an environmental site assessment at the incinerator was Harrisburg environmental attorney Bill Cluck.

In March 2003, Cluck filed a Notice of Appeal with the DEP and the Harrisburg Authority recounting how the required 'Form D Environmental Assessment' paperwork was never filed properly in connection with the incinerator at various times in its troubled history...

Cluck wrote at the time, *"Issuance of the Renewal was an abuse of discretion, arbitrary and capricious, unreasonable and contrary to law because the applicant did not affirmatively demonstrate the permit application was complete and accurate. Among other reasons, the application did not include a Form D environmental assessment and an operating plan addressing operations during the ten year term of the Renewal."*...

Ironically, environmental lawyer Cluck today is chairman of the Harrisburg Authority. Cluck is leading secret negotiations to sell the incinerator to LCSWMA.

We hope that the Paterno Family law suit against the NCAA will achieve a full trial. Then the NCAA can be exposed for its rush to judgment, the Freeh report for its inadequacies and prejudices, and the governor for his conniving.

Let justice be done -- not only for the *"kid in the shower"*, but for Joe Paterno, Penn State alumni, and the university.

The above items have been excerpted from www.NewsLanc.com. Visit the website daily for news, commentary, letters, and other features. Suggestions and letters can be sent anonymously through the home page.