

## Letters: 'Human problem, not racial problem'

Sunday, July 12, 2009

Letters to the Editor / Sunday Edition

### 'Human problem, not race problem'

According to "Keep hospital shut, blacks tell Corzine" (Page A-1, July 10), some people are injecting a racial issue into the reopening of the former Pascack Valley Hospital in Westwood. They are ignoring many facts in their conclusion:

- \* They ignore all the black families and their churches located within walking distance of the old hospital. They received medical treatment there and worked there.
- \* They ignore the presence of a heavy Asian population that was served by a highly esteemed program at Pascack Valley. As much as 30 percent of the student body in some of the area's schools is Asian, and this program offered services designed to meet the special needs of their parents and grandparents.
- \* They ignore the fact that will make this hospital reopening unique: It won't cost the state or taxpayers a dime.
- \* They ignore, although it has been said many times, that several area hospitals have closed since the state's report that our area had too many beds. These hospital closures have left us with a shortage of several hundred beds, according to these same criteria.

This is not a race problem. It's a human problem. Regardless of one's color, people should be able to access medical care in a timely manner. Nobody wants a crisis to become a mortal calamity. We have heard repeatedly from local citizens about the obstacles they faced trying to receive hospital care after Pascack Valley closed. The sad stories of some urban hospital closings should not be the excuse to keep another hospital closed.

### **Charlotte Vandervalk**

Westwood, July 10

The writer, a Republican, represents New Jersey's 39th District in the Assembly.

I am outraged at Assemblyman Gordon Johnson, D-Englewood, the Rev Reginald T. Jackson and the NAACP for injecting race into the attempt to reopen Pascack Valley Hospital in Westwood ("Keep hospital shut, blacks tell Corzine," Page A-1, July 10).

If you have been to any hospital lately, you know how overcrowded the emergency room is. Patients often have to wait for hours. If reopening Pascack Valley helps alleviate these conditions and helps sick and injured patients, then it is well worth it.

We have elected a black president. I believe it is time for people like Johnson, Jackson and the NAACP leadership to stop using the race card.

### **Mark Aromando**

Lyndhurst, July 10

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