

other clinics combine their specific treatments to help achieve the goal of rehabilitation for the patients; and

WHEREAS, The Fort Howard Hospital has an active Audiology and Speech Pathology Department, an Orthotics Laboratory, a fully equipped Coronary Care Unit/Intensive Care Unit, a Respiratory Care Unit, a Satellite Hemodialysis Unit, and a diversified alcohol treatment program, which is operated in conjunction with the Baltimore Veterans' Administration Hospital; and

WHEREAS, Ward and clinic environment experience is available to students from vocational training schools, community colleges, and universities in nursing, physical therapy, psychology, social work, audiology and speech pathology; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 500 employees complete a team of physicians, nurses, and dentists, and a full range of ancillary health care professional staff, supplemented by medical consultants. A large number of volunteers from service, civic, and fraternal organizations in the area donate their services to patient care; and

WHEREAS, The hospital is affiliated with the Schools of Medicine of Johns Hopkins University and the University of Maryland; and

WHEREAS, The Fort Howard Hospital and other VA medical facilities at Baltimore and Perry Point, Maryland; Martinsburg, West Virginia; and Washington, D.C.; constitute a VA Medical District. These hospitals work together as a unit to deliver health care to the veteran patient in a more efficient, effective, and economical manner; and

WHEREAS, The Fort Howard Hospital has an ideal location, easily accessible to the community, approximately 15 miles south of downtown Baltimore, on 90 landscaped acres in a beautiful and historical rural setting located on the waterfront; and

WHEREAS, The location of the hospital is particularly appropriate for rehabilitation in that it provides picturesque views of the Chesapeake Bay and the busy shipping activities that enter Baltimore Harbor and is adjacent to a county recreational park; and

WHEREAS, The closing of Fort Howard Hospital would result in a net loss of beds available to veterans at a time when the demand can be reasonably expected to increase substantially, and a shortage currently exists; and

WHEREAS, It is incongruous to consider closing a veterans' hospital thereby reducing the available bed population when a national survey shows this area as one needing a new hospital; now, therefore, be it