



Commissioner Emma J. Darnell's
SPECIAL REPORT

January 29, 2009

“TRUTH-TELLING ABOUT GRADY”

The time has come for “truth-telling” about Grady Hospital. If Grady does not receive significant financial assistance for the Trauma Program and other vital services to Georgia residents during the '09 Session of the Georgia General Assembly, it is my belief that Grady will not survive.

Grady is a “regional” hospital trying to operate with the financial support of two counties—Fulton and DeKalb. In FY 2007, services to non-residents of Fulton and DeKalb Counties cost Grady \$34 million dollars. In the same year, the net cost of services to eligible Fulton County residents cost Grady \$25 million dollars. However, in 2007, Fulton County paid Grady \$105 million dollars! Fulton County over-paid Grady by \$80 million dollars.

Why? Because for more than 50 years, contrary to popular belief, Fulton County has not paid Grady for Grady’s services —Fulton County has paid for Grady’s deficits.

Today, Fulton County is at the end of the line. Declining revenues and increased demands upon the Criminal Justice System have created a financial situation we cannot ignore. Further, elementary rules of fairness indicate that it is wrong—legally and morally to force Fulton County taxpayers to pay for Grady’s services to non-residents of Fulton County.

I believe it is time to choose: Will we have a public hospital like Parkland Hospital (Dallas County, Texas) funded by the state and local government and nationally recognized for the quality of its healthcare services to the poor? Or a hospital like Grady—fighting each day for survival?

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