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# Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Commission on Healthcare and Hospital Funding Discusses Certificate of Need and Healthcare Price Transparency at Florida Capitol**

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – Today, the Commission on Healthcare and Hospital Funding continued its examination of healthcare price transparency and the state’s Certificate of Need (CON) program during a meeting at the Florida Capitol.

Dr. Keith Smith, Medical Director and CEO for the Surgery Center of Oklahoma, opened the meeting with a presentation that addressed two topics covered at recent Commission meetings – Ambulatory Surgical Centers (ASCs) and price transparency. The Surgery Center of Oklahoma is one of the first in the country to publish their prices online for patients to review prior to scheduling their procedure. This practice is one of several measures proposed by Governor Rick Scott as an effort to protect Floridian’s from hospital price gouging.

Carlos Beruff, Chair of the Commission, said, “In support of Governor Scott’s commitment to hospital price transparency, we have added a form to the Commission’s website where patients who have been subject to price gouging can share their story with us. It is important that we get a sense of what is actually taking place out in the communities before we make any recommendations on how to improve transparency and accountability in this industry.”

Patients can submit their experience with price gouging at

[www.healthandhospitalcommission.com/pricegouging](http://www.healthandhospitalcommission.com/pricegouging).

The Commission was also joined by Marisol Fitch, head of the state's Certificate of Need program. The CON program is a regulatory process that requires certain healthcare provider types (e.g. hospitals, hospices, skilled nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities) to obtain state approval before offering certain new or expanded services. Fitch's presentation provided an overview of Florida's current CON program for hospitals as well as a history of deregulation efforts and their outcomes.

Elizabeth Dudek, Co-Executive Director for the Commission, said, "I would like to thank Dr. Smith and the rest of the presenters from today's meeting for helping us continue our examination of Florida's healthcare funding landscape. It is important that we continue to hear from industry experts, while we also take time to make the connections between the presentations we have heard so far, as we begin to organize our findings of the Commission."

State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong said, "Transparency is essential for Florida's residents and visitors to understand and use our state's health care system with confidence. The Commission continues to identify opportunities to improve the efficient use of taxpayer dollars in health care for the people for Florida."

A recording of this meeting will be made available at <http://thefloridachannel.org/videos/>. The Commission will continue to seek out greater transparency around the way that taxpayer dollars are used to improve transparency and support better health outcomes moving forward. For more information about the Commission on Healthcare and Hospital Funding, please visit [www.healthandhospitalcommission.com](http://www.healthandhospitalcommission.com).

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*The Commission on Healthcare and Hospital Funding was formed by Governor Rick Scott to investigate the role of taxpayer funding for hospitals, insurers, and healthcare providers in Florida. The Commission is comprised of nine members and two Co-Executive Directors. For more information about the Commission and its activities, please visit <http://www.healthandhospitalcommission.com>.*