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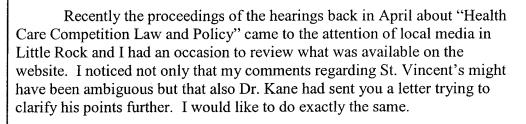
July 2003

JB:icm

July 21, 2003

Donald S. Clark Office of the Secretary Federal Trade Commission 600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, DC 20580

Dear Mr. Clark:



ORIGINAL

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RECEIVED DOCUMENTS

SECRETARY

Many of the challenges that face St. Vincent's current administration were fundamentally inherited from their predecessors. It is very clear because of the proximity of St. Vincent's (I can see them from my office window) and the great amount of information available in the town about each hospital's activities that Mr. Mansfield and his team have done an enormous amount in an effort to turn these problems around and to bring St. Vincent's back to a strong presence in our community. I certainly would not want to leave you or any of the readers of the hearings with the impression that I consider the present activities and trajectory of St. Vincent to be anything other than improving and headed in a very good direction. Thank you for the opportunity to clarify this point.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Bates, M.D.

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President and CEO