



Marion County Board of County Commissioners

McPherson Governmental Campus

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District 1 - Craig Curry, Commissioner
District 2 - Kathy Bryant, Chairman
District 3 - Matt McClain, Commissioner
District 4 - Carl Zalak III, Vice Chair
District 5 - Michelle Stone, Commissioner

October 21, 2025

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Marion County Board of County Commissioners, please allow this letter to serve as our support for the Estella Byrd Whitman Wellness and Community Resource Center (EBWCRC) and its 2026 Appropriations Project Request to the Florida legislature. Since its opening in 2018, the EBWCRC has provided healthcare to a population approaching 10,000 residents. As one of the only primary care providers located in the federally declared medical desert of the West Ocala community, the EBWCRC delivers essential primary care services to residents who would otherwise lack access. The center addresses significant barriers such as transportation, medical dispensing, sliding fee programs for those lacking financial resources, and other socioeconomic disparities affecting many of the residents it serves.

While the center does not directly provide specialty care, it collaborates effectively with community partners to offer dental, behavioral health, career development, and other vital services. EBWCRC has successfully developed partnerships and participates in community collaboratives to meet the healthcare needs of Marion County's most vulnerable residents. Our county has over 428,000 residents, and the EBWCRC plays a vital role in addressing these gaps in care. We consider EBWCRC's provision of affordable healthcare services to be invaluable to our community. Its remarkable growth from 321 patient visits in 2023, to 2,833 visits in 2024, and to more than 5,000 patient visits mid-year 2025 alone, is a testament to the impact EBWCRC is having on the community. EBWCRC is a highly regarded medical clinic, supported by dedicated board members, staff, and community stakeholders, all committed to continuously improving access to care and expanding patient services.

The services that EBWCRC provides to the residents of Marion County are invaluable, essential, and have a meaningful impact on the community. EBWCRC has the full support of Marion County BCC in its pursuit of appropriations funding.

Very respectfully,

Kathy Bryant
Chairman
Marion County Board of County Commissioners