

Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Robert Trenchel, the President and CEO of Yuma Regional Medical Center. Thank you for being here in person today – to get a first-hand account of the impact that open borders have had on our hospital and community over the past year and more.

I have been in Yuma for close to 8 years as CEO. I bring over 30 years of experience in health care administration. Yuma Regional Medical Center is a 406-bed hospital that offers a full range of acute care services with the exception of transplant surgery, neurosurgery and burn. The closest hospitals that do what we do are located 180 miles away in Phoenix or San Diego. Given our geographic location – our hospital and health system holds a deep responsibility of keeping local families close to home for care whenever possible. For many who live here, traveling out town for care is an unbearable challenge. They depend on us to be here. Our mission to meet the needs of our community – is always at the forefront of every decision.

I also want to acknowledge the work and heart of our staff at Yuma Regional Medical Center – who continue to care for patients each and every day. They provide the same high level of care for every patient. We do not treat anyone differently and we take pride in that. If your mom, or grandchild walked through our doors – or if a migrant walks through our doors -- they would receive the same level of care.

Over the last approximately year and a half -- we've had a significant number of migrants cross the border into our community. Our hospital saw an increase in the number of migrants seeking care beginning in the late Fall / early Winter of 2021. They arrive to our hospital emergency room in a multitude of ways some patients come to us via border patrol who typically release them from custody upon arrival, other patients walk in, take taxi's and some even come by Uber. As I've said we are the only acute care hospital in the area – which means diversion to another facility is not an option. We are it.

Some migrants come to us with minor ailments but many of them come in with significant disease. We have had migrant patients on dialysis, cardiac catheterization and in need of heart surgery. Many are very sick. They have long term complications of chronic disease that have not been care for. Some end up in the ICU for 60 days or more. One of the largest cohorts we have seen are maternity patients who present with little or no prenatal care. These higher risk pregnancies and births result in higher complication rates and longer hospital stays. Due to a lack of pre-natal care, many of these babies require a stay in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit -- some for a month or more at a time. There are language and cultural concerns with migrant patients. We work through those but when you consider the volume and the associated case management that comes with it – resources have to support this as well. Migrants often require three times the amount of human resources to resolve their cases and provide them with a safe discharge as defined by CMS [CMS-3317-F]. That effort includes assistance locating their families, making sure they have a safe place to go when they are discharged, arranging and sometimes purchasing durable

medical equipment when needed. We have paid for emergency air transport when they need a higher level of care; we've paid for hotel rooms, taxis and car seats. We do these things because it's the right thing to do from a humanitarian perspective but it also allows us to open a hospital bed sooner for another patient in our community.

None of these expenses are included in the \$26M figure. Our reality is this – we have delivered over \$26 million in uncompensated care to these individuals in the 12 month period of time from December 2021 –November 2022. That is an auditable figure. Let me assure you – it is not an approximation. That number comes from a detailed review of unpaid patient bills directly attributed to migrant patients. \$26 million in uncompensated care is not a sustainable business model. While this is a huge number that we have validated the point is that any number is not acceptable. It is an unsustainable model to have a hospital like ours bear the entire burden of paying for migrant health care. No business or service can survive on-going large-scale expense without any offsetting revenue. Because of this surge in migrant care we've had to hire additional staff, at a time when healthcare labor, post pandemic, is higher than ever.

Every dollar in uncompensated care has a direct impact on our hospital. Migrant patients are receiving free care, they have no ability to pay, we have no ability to bill anyone. We don't know their final destination, we don't know anything about them. We cannot provide completely free care to the residents of our community so the situation is not fair and is understandably concerning to them. Let me put this into perspective -- \$26 million dollars is equal salary and benefits to support 212 bedside nurses. The City of Yuma has 100,000 people and we've had over 300,000 people cross the border here. That's three times the population of Yuma coming across the border. We are the only hospital within a 3-hour radius – which means they come here. We've contacted our State and federal leaders and no one has a solution. They are willing to listen and are empathetic to our situation – but so far, we have no solutions or reimbursement for the care. We've been at this for well over a year now. On behalf of our entire hospital care team – I am here seeking your leadership support to find a payor source for the care we have already provided and will continue to provide into the future and to put long-term solutions into action that will support our daily commitment to be here for our community for years to come.

One hospital should not, and cannot, bear the health care costs of a national migrant problem that is deeply impacting Arizona and our community. We need a revenue source for this patient population so that we can sustainably provide high quality care to all comers and remain viable for the future. Thank you.