December 11, 2017

Selection Committee

Deloitte CFO of the Year Award

Dear Selection Committee,

I am honored to be asked to endorse the nomination of Steve Kukla for the Deloitte CFO of the Year Award. I have had the pleasure to know and work with Steve for more than 25 years since he began working for Mercy Health Network in Iowa in the early 1990s.

During the 25 years, a majority of my interactions with Steve have been focused on negotiating contracts and payment rates between Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Mercy Medical Center, Mercy Health Network, and Mercy ACO. Generally, these discussions can be contentious and unpleasant, but Steve is always very professional and often the voice of reason in the room. His focus is to achieve fair and equitable terms for Mercy, but also acknowledged they had to be fair and equitable for Wellmark as well. He is always collaborative and understands that it is business and he never made it personal, which is very much appreciated.

Steve’s experience in health care and his knowledge of health care finance is unmatched in my 30 plus years of working in the health care industry. During his tenure at Mercy Medical Center, Mercy Health Network, and Mercy ACO; he has been responsible for budgeting, third party contracting, long range planning, mergers and acquisitions, and value-based payment strategy.

During the last couple years, we have had the opportunity to be on the same side of the table, through a joint venture between Wellmark and Mercy Health Network, called Wellmark Value Health Plan. Steve and I serve on both the Board and Strategic Management Committee, which has allowed me to have more frequent interactions with him, focused on creating and managing Wellmark Value Health Plan strategy and day to day operations. He has done an excellent job of sharing information with others within Mercy Health Network and obtaining their feedback and decisions on key items in a timely manner.

In closing, if asked to describe Steve with one word, it would be “integrity”. He is a good listener and a man of his word and over the years of working with him he has continuously demonstrated these characteristics. Steve is a deserving recipient of the Deloitte CFO of the Year and knowing him, as I do, believe he will be humbled by the nomination.

Sincerely,



Mike Fay, Vice President

Health Networks & Innovation

Wellmark, Inc.