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Uniontown Hospital gets \$8.44 million state pledge

By Josh Krysak , Herald-Standard

The state pledged more than \$8 million toward the Uniontown Hospital expansion project during a ceremony outside the hospital Wednesday afternoon.

The \$8.44 million grant through the state Department of Community and Economic Development was secured by local legislators and will be distributed through the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority each year to help pay for the expansion.

"This is a win-win project," Dee Kaplan, DCED deputy secretary, said at a press conference held outside the hospital Wednesday. "We support this project because it brings good jobs that pay well but also because it brings better health care for the region."

The DCED grant money will be used to "jump start" construction of a new inpatient tower at the hospital that will include 56 patient rooms, centralize outpatient services and add an additional 100,000 square feet to the hospital.



Dee Kaplan, left, deputy secretary of the state Department of Community and Economic Development, presents a check for \$8.44 million to Uniontown Hospital to help finance additional renovations. On hand for the ceremony were, from left, Ed Fike, mayor of Uniontown; Andrew French, executive director of Fayette County Redevelopment Authority, and Paul Bacharach, president/CEO of Uniontown Hospital. Robert Esquivel/Herald-Standard

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According to Kaplan, the \$59 million expansion project is expected to create more than 200 jobs - jobs that Uniontown Mayor Ed Fike said would further strengthen the local economy.

"Over 1,400 employees at the hospital make our economy strong," Fike said. "We support the expansion project that will improve care to area residents."

Hospital board chairman Ben Wright said the entire project includes expanding the hospital's emergency department, create a new main entrance and new main lobby, the consolidation of outpatient services and improved parking.

"We are not an ordinary hospital," Wright said. "We are an extraordinary hospital doing extraordinary things."

Paul Bacharach, hospital president and chief executive officer, said that the project is "a giant step forward" and added that the expanded services will help the hospital better serve the 110,000 community residents already being served by the hospital.

Local legislators including state Rep. Tim Mahoney, D-South Union Township; state Rep. Deberah Kula, D-North Union Township; state Rep. Bill DeWeese, D-Waynesburg; state Rep. Peter J. Daley, D-California, and state Sen. Richard Kasunic, D-Dunbar.

The Fayette County commissioners, along with other local leaders and members of the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority, also attended the event.



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