

Taking a Stand for Bryce Hospital



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What will happen to Bryce hospital?

At the Northport Civic Center tonight, employees, representatives of patients, and city and state leaders showed up to voice their demands to keep the state's psychiatric facility where it is.

Bryce Hospital employees who enjoy state benefits do not like the idea of the hospital becoming privatized, nor do they welcome the state's considering a move to the former Carraway facility in Birmingham.

"I have 22 years, and I'll have 23 years in December, but I am concerned about the rest of the employees there...some of them that got one year, five years."

"The patients...some of them have been there for years and years and years, and that's their home," says employee Reba Reach.

Mayor Walt Maddox says Tuscaloosa without Bryce would translate into a huge economic blow.

"It would be devastating to the city to lose 657 jobs and a \$17 million payroll. Bryce is one of our biggest employers."

Another option: the University of Alabama has reportedly offered \$60 million for the property which the state has not accepted. It's estimated it would cost the state \$85 million to build a new facility.

Attorney Zondra Hutto, who serves as a guardian to many patients at Bryce, says the University should be able to offer more.

"I believe they have the economic potential to pay a fair market value."

Tonight many, including Mayor Maddox, say it's important to remember and to preserve Bryce's legacy.

"This community has invested in Bryce Hospital for 120 years. We deserve the opportunity to keep Bryce hospital in Tuscaloosa."

Mayor Maddox has filed an injunction against the state to prevent the sale of Bryce Hospital.

