



Remarks of Gregory W. Powell, Chairman  
Harold Alfond Foundation

**MaineGeneral Medical Center – Press Conference  
Friday, May 7, 2010**

At the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care

Thank you, Scott, and good morning Governor Baldacci, Chairman Marden, Board members, distinguished guests, members of the press.

Thank you all for joining us on this beautiful Spring day.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I am delighted to be with you along with fellow Foundation trustees Peter Alfond and Bob Marden. We are here to make a special announcement.

In the summer of 2007, in his final days, Harold Alfond joined with all of us at this magnificent place to celebrate the opening of the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care. Harold was beaming with pride at what the people of central Maine had accomplished --- by coming together --- to build a regional state-of-the-art center for treating a disease that has taken so many lives and so much joy from its victims and their families.

Today, Harold would be proud of what has been accomplished since that opening day. This center is a model for regionalized health care. It is a shining example of excellence by and for Maine people --- an excellence which was achieved by combining resources, consolidating oncology care in a region of Maine which doesn't have a lot of money, but does have a citizenry with foresight, selfless dedication, boundless energy, and an inspiring team spirit to get things done. Here, in this place, the citizens of Central Maine, led by Scott Bullock and the entire MaineGeneral team, saw the future, proved their mettle and took a great first step forward in health care for Kennebec Valley and this state.

Today, the Harold Alfond Foundation is joining the MaineGeneral Team in taking yet another step -- a series of big steps forward for health care in Maine.

On behalf of the Harold Alfond Foundation, I am pleased to announce a commitment of \$35 million dollars to build a new, state-of-the-art regional hospital here in North Augusta and a comprehensive outpatient care center at Thayer Hospital in Waterville.

Our support for this project will come in two parts --- a payment of \$25 million dollars and an additional payment of \$10 million dollars. In true Harold Alfond style, both parts will rely on you as our partners in the community to join the team and we know you will rise to the occasion. First, the \$25 million dollar part is conditioned upon the project receiving state approval and upon government funding and construction of highway access off Interstate 95. So we are counting on our government to help make this new hospital a reality.

Second, we call on the people and businesses of Kennebec Valley and beyond to once again join with us in supporting excellence in health care. Dollar for dollar, the foundation will match all community donations to the project, up to \$10 million dollars.

Given the national debate on health care reform and the financial challenges we are facing both locally and nationwide, some may ask if now is the right time to build a new hospital. The answer is “Yes.”

For many reasons, this project is critical to the future of health care in Maine and the timing could not be better. This morning let me share just a few of the reasons that were compelling for us as Foundation Trustees.

First and foremost, this project is needed and it is needed now. MaineGeneral's 3 separate hospital facilities are inefficient and aging, while at the same time, delivery of health care faces the enormous challenges of an aging population, affordability, access to care for all our citizens, and a shortage of family physicians, nurses and other professionals who serve on the front line of care. By consolidating hospital services here on this beautiful site, MaineGeneral will be better equipped to meet these challenges more efficiently and effectively.

Second, we support this project because it is in great hands. Harold Alfond had a special gift --- the ability to pick winners. And Harold Alfond knew the people at MaineGeneral are true winners. Their talent and dedication is outstanding and if any team can build a new hospital and outpatient center to meet the challenges of health care for Maine's future, we have that team here.

Third, there is a reason we are supporting this project. Times are tough and this state is hurting. But, as with Mr. Alfond's remarkable experience of starting out in the shoe business in the depths of the Great Depression, it is exactly in the toughest of times when the best opportunities arise. Our financial system has been shaken, our economy has been in decline and people are out of work.

But precisely because of these painful conditions, now is the time to move forward. This project is a great opportunity to not only transform health care, but to preserve and create jobs, and inject hundreds of millions of dollars into the state's economy.

Finally, we support this project because building a new replacement hospital is a common sense and foresighted means by which our communities, constrained by limited financial resources, can enjoy a state-of-the-art facility which no town or city, acting alone, could ever afford to build. Harold Alfond knew that excellence and great accomplishment arise from teamwork -- from bringing people and communities together. There is no "I" in the word "team", Mr Alfond was fond of saying.

By consolidating hospital operations in one state-of-the-art facility, a center of excellence for Maine people, we choose a future for health care built on teamwork, a future that chooses excellence and refuses to sacrifice that excellence for parochialism.

There comes a time in every speaker's life when he looks out over his audience and sees every face filled with appreciation, expectation and unalloyed pleasure. It's shortly after the words "so, in conclusion."

So in conclusion, let me leave you with this thought. In the final years of his life, as his 15-year battle with cancer was coming to an end, Harold Alfond could have gone anywhere in the world to be treated.

He chose to be treated by the men and women of MaineGeneral. He chose you because you are the finest. And he chose to be in Maine because the people who live here are the best and deserve the best.

We know that 5 years from today, there will be a beautiful, new hospital on this lovely site.

It will have been built by and for the people of Maine whom Harold Alfond loved.

And when that beautiful new hospital opens its doors, the finest of health care professionals will be providing the finest of care in the finest of hospitals. And somewhere, Harold Alfond will be beaming with pride.