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MICAH Z. KELLNER  
65<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

## **HHC Coler-Goldwater Nurse Scheduling Changes are Unfair To Patients, Workers**

*Statement by Assembly Member Micah Z. Kellner  
March 19, 2009*

“For more than half a century the HHC Coler-Goldwater Hospital on Roosevelt Island has played an important role in New York City’s healthcare system providing HIV and AIDS care, geriatric care, primary care, rehabilitation services, and 24-hour long-term care to children and adults with chronic and multiple disabilities. The work done at Coler and Goldwater requires having the kind of dedicated staff that goes that extra mile and the nurses that work here exemplify that compassionate professionalism.

“We all know that this is a particularly tough budget year and that the proposed Executive budget before the legislature includes measures that will impact HHC hospitals, including Coler-Goldwater. It would be dishonest to say that there will not be cuts to healthcare when a final budget is passed. But in Albany, I am working to ensure that public hospitals like the one I represent here on Roosevelt Island get the funding they need to continue to fulfill their missions.

“Today we are here to voice our opposition to management’s decision to force nurses to move to a five-day schedule, instead of continuing to offer a choice between a five-day and four-day schedule. This decision does not serve the long-term interests of the hospital and it is unfair to its staff. Two years ago, introducing the option of a four-day week attracted many new nurses to Coler-Goldwater despite the state’s nursing shortage. To reverse this labor policy will undoubtedly drive many of these nurses away from the hospital. This is especially true during a hiring freeze and will result in an unacceptable situation for both staff and patients.

“It is time to break the old habits of labor and management butting heads; we know that this will only worsen our problems. Instead, we must endeavor to work together. I implore hospital management to come to the table and work with its nurses to find better solutions to the problems that are facing Coler and Goldwater.”