

Hills, Bonnie

From: Laurence Msall [lmsall@civicfed.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 14, 2011 2:49 PM
To: Hills, Bonnie
Cc: Laurence Msall; Sarah Wetmore; Laurie Cohen
Attachments: Civic Federation Letter - Oak Forest Hospital.pdf

Dear Mr. Galassie and Members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board:

Attached please find an electronic copy of a letter the Civic Federation is submitting to the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board in support of a plan by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System to discontinue acute-care hospital services at Oak Forest Hospital.

The decision to transform Oak Forest Hospital into a comprehensive regional outpatient care center was the result of over a year of deliberation and is key to the System's strategic plan. That strategic plan was approved by the Cook County Board and must be implemented if the System is to continue to provide high-quality, cost-efficient healthcare services to the most vulnerable residents of the County.

As detailed in the attached letter, copies of which were also sent to Governor Quinn and to the Health System, the Civic Federation urges you to grant the permit to restructure Oak Forest Hospital at your May 10th meeting.

Sincerely,

Laurence Msall

President
The Civic Federation

Laurence Msall
President
The Civic Federation
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The Civic Federation

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April 14, 2011

Mr. Dale Galassie
Chairman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Project #10-078 – Oak Forest Hospital

Dear Mr. Galassie:

The Civic Federation strongly supports the application by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System to discontinue acute-care hospital services at Oak Forest Hospital.

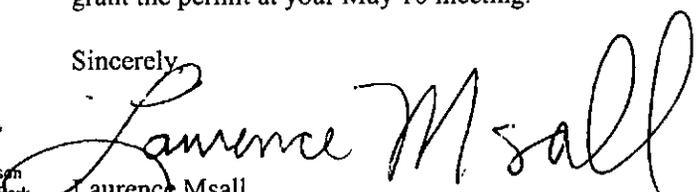
The decision to close Oak Forest Hospital and turn the existing campus into a comprehensive regional center for outpatient care was the result of a strategic planning process that began in May 2009 and took more than a year. The process included 14 community meetings across Cook County attended by hundreds of people. After considerable deliberation, the five-year strategic plan was approved by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System's Board of Directors in June 2010 and by the Cook County Board of Commissioners in July 2010.

The Civic Federation supported the Health System's strategic planning process and the subsequent decision to refocus the System's limited resources on expanding outpatient services. The Civic Federation agrees with the Health System's conclusion that serving an average of 50 to 60 inpatients a day on a campus with more than a million square feet of facility space is not financially prudent. Oak Forest has offered only limited intensive care service and has routinely transferred the truly critically ill to Stroger Hospital. According to the Health System, 85% of the visits to its emergency room could be treated in an urgent care setting, which would be available at Oak Forest under the strategic plan, along with a wide array of primary, specialty and diagnostic services.

As a 117-year old non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of government services, the Civic Federation has had a long history of examining budget issues relating to Cook County government. The Civic Federation has projected that both the County and its Health System face serious financial challenges going forward. Failure to allow the Health System to restructure itself so it can provide healthcare more efficiently would increase the financial stress on the System and on Cook County.

The Civic Federation appreciates the opportunity to support the application by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System. We urge you and the other members of the Board to grant the permit at your May 10 meeting.

Sincerely,


Laurence Msall
President

cc: Illinois Health Facilities and Review Board
Governor Pat Quinn



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