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WILLIAM M. BEAVERS
COMMISSIONER - 4TH DISTRICT
COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Finance
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Real Estate

Date: April 19, 2011

RECEIVED

Dale Galassie,
Chairman of Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street -2nd floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

APR 20 2011

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Oak Forest Hospital

The Cook County Health and Hospitals System is the largest provider of health care to poor and uninsured clients. Now consideration is being made to close the South Suburban extension of the system. Oak Forest Hospital has been in existence for 80+ years and over the years several improvements have been made to ensure a high level of patient care as well as specialty programs added to this campus. Some of those programs are: ventilator, palliative, AIDS units, brain injury rehabilitation, and pain management to list a few. Other programs include Oncology, maternal fetal medicine and mammography services. With the incredible work that is being done to ensure effective health care is provided to the community, now Oak Forest Hospital is in jeopardy of closing inpatient care to the South Suburban community. We come to you and ask two questions:

Where will these patients go to receive adequate healthcare?

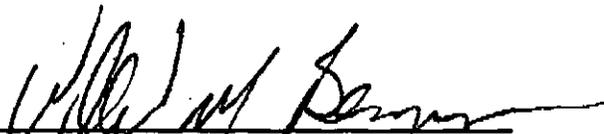
Are the same programs available at any other Hospital in the area?

According to reports several area hospitals have weighed in on this topic Blue Island Metro South, Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn and Ingalls Hospital. The overall consensus from these Hospitals is that closing Oak Forest would have an overwhelming impact on their facilities. Blue Island Metro South says they will "step up and help those patients in transition" but "one can only do so much". Christ Medical center says "our usual overcrowding would get worse", and Ingalls Hospital doesn't have enough beds for the patients that they currently see. It is clear that the surrounding hospitals will not be able to carry the burden of Oak Forest patients into the delivery of adequate medical services. So we have to ask again, where will our patients receive sufficient healthcare?

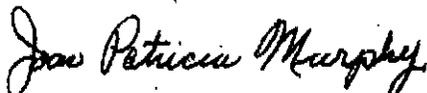


It is the responsibility of the **Cook County Board of Commissioners** to fund the Health and Hospitals system which includes Oak Forest Hospital. We are charged with coming up with cost effective measures and responsible spending to ensure there are funds to provide adequate healthcare to our citizens. If funding is the problem then that is the responsibility of the **Cook County Board** to correct. Hospital closure is not the solution. Closing Oak Forest will impact more than just patient care it will also impact the already dramatic unemployment rate of medical staff, underutilized medical space and many other negative economic areas. In Illinois the unemployment rate is 9% and in the South Suburbs alone it is 15%, how much more can we handicap this already struggling community. **We totally oppose the closing of Oak Forest Hospital.**

Sincerely,



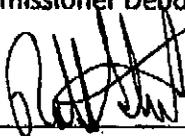
Commissioners William M. Beavers, 4th District



Commissioner Joan Patricia Murphy, 6th District



Commissioner Deborah Sims, 5th District



Commissioner Robert B. Steele, 2nd District



FAX

For: C. Avery

Fax number: 217-785-4111

**From: Commissioners Beavers, Murphy, Sims and
Steele**

Fax number: 312-603-2039

Date: 04/20/2011

Regarding: Oak Forest

Number of pages: 3

Comments: