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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF COOK COUNTY
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TONI PRECKWINKLE
PRESIDENT

July 21, 2014

Ms. Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Letter of Support
Holy Cross Hospital Proposed Psychiatry Unit
Project 13-076

Dear Ms. Avery:

I am writing this letter in support of Sinai Health System's proposal to open a 26 bed inpatient psychiatric unit at Holy Cross Hospital, a member of Sinai Health System.

One of the most serious problems that Cook County faces is dealing with the large number of mentally ill patients at Cook County Jail. We estimate that between 25% and 35% of our jail population has a mental illness which greatly contributes to the reasons for their incarceration. The Cook County Jail is neither equipped nor appropriate to serve as a mental health facility. What this population needs is a comprehensive behavioral health system that can address inpatient, outpatient, and community treatment. The County's experience at Cook County Jail dramatically demonstrates that we need greater capacity in our mental health system.

Holy Cross Hospital is ideally located to address the behavioral health needs of patients on the Southwest Side of Chicago. A large percentage of the patients that are served by Holy Cross are either without insurance or on Medicaid. With one of the busiest emergency departments in Chicago, Holy Cross already has a large number of psychiatric patients seeking treatment in its emergency room. Sinai Health System, including Holy Cross, has consistently demonstrated a commitment to providing health services to all patients including patients covered by the Medicaid program and those without insurance. In addition, Sinai Health System has a long history of providing a full continuum of comprehensive and high quality behavioral health services.

I strongly urge the Illinois Health Facilities and Planning Board to approve this application.

Sincerely,

Toni Preckwinkle
President

