



February 18, 2015

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St., Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Winchester Endoscopy Center, ¹⁴~~15~~-025

Dear Ms. Olson:

I am writing to express my support of Winchester Endoscopy's proposal to establish a licensed center that will focus on colorectal cancer screening and other endoscopic procedures for the esophagus and colon. This project is for a Libertyville, Illinois location and, after some delay, will be considered at the March 2015 Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board meeting.

By coincidence, for the last 15 years, March has been designated by the federal government as National Colon Cancer Awareness Month. Colorectal cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer deaths in this country, in part because of the high rate of metastatic disease — primarily in the liver — among patients and a lack of tools to identify early-stage and more treatable metastases. While colorectal cancer screening rates increased over the last decade, one in three adults between the ages of 50 and 75 still are not receiving the recommended screening. And, unfortunately, colon cancer is on the rise in individuals under 50.

This project will enhance the availability and accessibility of this service for patients regardless of their ability to pay. This is particularly true given the provider's commitment to continue to serve Medicaid patients and based on its arrangement with the Lake County Health Department to accept and treat uninsured patients who require endoscopy services.

Physician driven health care delivery is in the best interest of all of our constituencies - patients, health systems, those paying for care, and regulators. By following best practices, this project will promote better health and lower costs by implementing documented best practices. I urge you to give the Winchester Endoscopy Center's application the utmost consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Kirk".

Mark Steven Kirk
United States Senator