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Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
2nd Floor
525 West Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

RE: Project 14-043, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, O'Fallon

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this application.

The perspective I bring is from more than a half-century of executive leadership in healthcare, most recently as chairman of a number of boards having to do with Health and Human Services: Donate Life Foundation (MidAmerica Transplant Services), the Greater St. Louis Health Foundation, Cape Albeon Retirement Community, the Institute for Family Medicine and others.

I also serve on the boards of the SIUE School of Dental Medicine, Uplands Village (Tennessee), Deaconess Faith Community Nurse Ministries, St. Andrew's Resources for Seniors System of CCRCs and other programs, and several other boards and agencies.

I have served as chairman of the American Protestant Health Association, the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries of the United Church of Christ, the Health & Welfare Coordinating Council, and of a number of other health and human service organizations through the years, national, and at state and local levels.

More specific to this hospital application, I am president emeritus of the Deaconess Health System (30 years as COO & CEO). This included three hospitals, Deaconess Foundation, Deaconess College of Nursing, retirement centers, nursing homes, dialysis centers, MediCenters, including one in Fairview Heights, etc.

Much of this work is and has been centered on needs of those not otherwise being served, or of those underserved by existing programs. I have tried through the years to resist the temptation to duplicate services to existing, advantaged populations at the expense of those whom the system often forgets.

Primarily from the above perspective, I ask that you deny the application of St. Elizabeth's Hospital to build in O'Fallon, which, despite my rural Lebanon mailing address, is the town we

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have called home for the past 42 years, and where our children attended school, and where we shop and worship.

It would be poor stewardship and poor planning to erect a second hospital in the shadow of another hospital well-equipped to serve the area's population (Memorial East); it would make access to services in the Belleville area much more difficult, particularly for disadvantaged population; it would add greatly to the overall cost of healthcare and not bring new or needed services but rather duplicate services, which in itself would exacerbate the growing problem of healthcare economics in this country.

It is clear that the community as a whole does not support this new hospital, does not want to experience the adverse economic impact, and does not recognize any remedy to unmet needs by the building of such a hospital. Of course, there are always parochial interests with personal agendas on all sides of any issue, and this is no exception.

But Memorial Hospital is well equipped in mission and facilities to serve those from a wide variety of socio-economic circumstances within its service area.

Critically important, permitting another hospital to locate in the same area would disrupt everyone's ability to provide balanced service to all. Providing such balanced service is an urgent challenge to health-care institutions today, and the pressure will only increase.

I believe you have the wisdom to understand these issues and the judgment so needed today.

We have experienced the City of St. Louis the dismal effect that hospitals fleeing to more affluent suburbs had on the remaining population. Despite pledges to stay and serve, this soon evaporates. Let us learn from this and avoid repeating that mistake on the East side.

Faithfully,



Richard P. Ellerbrake
President Emeritus, Deaconess Health System