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CRISTINA CASTRO
 STATE SENATOR • 22ND DISTRICT

Chairman Kathryn J. Olson
 Illinois Health Facilities and Service Review Board
 525 W. Jefferson Street, Second Floor
 Springfield, Illinois 62761

November 17, 2017

Dear Chairwoman Olson:

I see that Valley Ambulatory Surgery Center recently filed a Certificate of Need application, Project 17-057. I notice that Valley Ambulatory Surgery Center ("Valley") is not enrolled in Medicaid nor does it really do charity care. That concerns me.

Many of the local hospitals that serve my legislative district and those legislative districts near me bear the burden of treating patients that are enrolled in Medicaid or qualify as charity care patients. Valley lists within its CON application five hospitals, Northwestern Delnor Hospital, Presence St, Joseph's Hospital, Advocate Sherman Hospital, Rush Copley Hospital, and Presence Mercy Hospital. These five hospital combined in 2016 to provide care to 209,755 Medicaid patients and 20,143 charity care patients.

It is my understanding that one of the purposes of the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act is to maintain and improve the provision of essential health care services and increase the accessibility of those services to the medically underserved and indigent. It is clear that Valley shifts that burden to the hospitals since it is not enrolled in Medicaid and barely provides charity care. I think that undermines the purposes of the Act and the safety net that the hospitals provide to the community.

I am troubled how building a new Ambulatory Surgery Center a few blocks away will guarantee the availability of quality health care to the general public and would be in the best interests of the public to approve it.

I respectfully request that the Health Facilities and Service Review Board consider these factors among other factors when reviewing Valley's CON application.

This is an important issue and I will continue to monitor the progress of the Planning Board in addressing it.

Respectfully submitted,

Cristina Castro
 State Senator - 22nd District

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