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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

Ms. Courtney R. Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Opposition to CON 18-042, Quincy Medical Group Surgery Center in Quincy, Illinois

Dear Ms. Avery:

My name is Kyra Whittaker. I have concerns regarding the CON 18-042 that Quincy Medical Group Surgery Center in Quincy, Illinois has applied for.

I have several concerns that I would like to share. First, this is clearly a duplication of services. Blessing and QMG already offer outpatient surgery at QMG's location. From my understanding, this relationship has been in place for 13+ years and has been working just fine. What has changed? Why is there a need for another surgery center in a town of this size? I favor Blessing and QMG continuing to work together to provide the best care to our patients and our community. Having a second surgery would not be any benefit to our community. By allowing this surgery center to happen, it is going to put Blessing and QMG in a position to work against each other, as opposed to working with each other. Having my business degree, I question how QMG will be able to afford a \$19+ million dollar surgery center with only roughly 5 days operating cost on hand as is stated in the above CON 18-042. As well as knowing that they were unsuccessful at having a surgery center initially on their own, what has changed? Will this surgery center be approved, last a few years, hurt our community, only to find out that they will again have to sell or close it?

Secondly, the job loss that would hit our community would be horrific. Four hundred plus jobs can be lost due to this surgery center. We already have many families moving away due to lack of jobs, cost of living and the fact that it appears that Quincy is a dying town. It is not uncommon to turn on the news and hear almost weekly of another business closing. Losing 400 jobs would not only affect our community, but the communities around us as well. The opening of the surgery center would not produce 400+ jobs. This would not be a "break even" with QMG gaining 400 jobs and Blessing losing 400 job. QMG would just be transferring the majority of the employee's that would work at the proposed surgery center from their main campus. Thus, not producing a significant amount of jobs.

Lastly, Blessing may be a not for profit company, however, they tremendously influence our community. Much of the revenue that is generated by the outpatient surgery is used to fulfill its mission of providing Safety Net services to our area. This includes trauma care and behavioral health. Blessing is the only provider in our region to offer these services. Losing these services to our community would be detrimental. As I am sure you understand many insurance companies do not provide adequate coverages for inpatient behavioral medicine. I am passionate about this subject because I see the amount of people struggling that need help. I have children who have struggled with depression, anxiety, and so much more due to the world we live in. I see my friends children and teenagers, our future, struggling. They need

this service. We need this service. However, most importantly, our community needs this service. I ask that you take this in to account when you make your decision. Blessing Hospital was able to give back \$67 million dollars to our community last year, and adding this surgery center would take away anywhere from \$25- \$41 million dollars. This is just not acceptable. We cannot take away a service that so many people need to add a service that currently is not being used to its full potential. The current surgery center has not outgrown its area and they do not have to turn away patients. By allowing this to go through, services will not be able to be possible for people who need it desperately. Looking at it from this aspect makes me think that it would be of the best interest of our community to not add an additional surgery center. Allow Blessing Hospital and QMG to continue to provide a wonderful surgery center together and to allow our community and the surrounding areas to have the option of the Safety Net services that are so desperately needed.

QMG and Blessing Hospital are staples in our community. I feel, no... I know, that QMG and Blessing can continue to work together to benefit this community. By doing so, they will be able to deliver key health services to our community and to continue to find new ways to meet our community needs.

I respectfully ask that the Health Facilities and Services Review Board deny CON application 18-042 (Quincy Medical Group Surgery Center). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Whittaker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kyra Whittaker