



February 6, 2019

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**HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

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

Re: Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois, Itasca (Project No. 18-047)

Dear Ms. Avery:

On behalf of the Itasca Chamber of Commerce and our business community, I write to express my support for the proposed Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois. We are pleased that this provider will help to address growing needs for eye surgery in Itasca, most especially the unmet needs of patients who have difficulty finding providers who accept Medicaid insurance.

As your Board is likely aware, the baby boomer generation is aging and increasingly relies on area health resources. As individuals age, so do their eyes, and visual impairment is increasingly common. We anticipate increased demand for ophthalmology surgical services in the near future. Not surprisingly, eye surgery can be incredibly complex and requires specialized equipment that most area surgical centers lack. The Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois will exclusively focus on eye procedures and will help meet our growing needs in Itasca.

The Center will also accept Medicaid, filling a large coverage gap among community ophthalmological surgical centers. The Center's referring ophthalmologists participate in area Medicaid managed care plans. With the opening of the Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois, these physicians and their patients may rest assured knowing Medicaid patients will have access to eye surgery in the area should they need it.

The Itasca Chamber of Commerce fully supports the proposed Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois. We urge you and the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to please approve this surgery center.

Sincerely,

Shirlanne Lemm  
President & CEO



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

Re: Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois, Itasca (Project No. 18-047)

Dear Ms. Avery:


On behalf of the GOA Regional Business Association and our business community, I write to express my support for the proposed Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois. This facility will help address the growing needs for surgical eye procedures in Itasca, most especially the unmet needs of patients who have difficulty finding providers who accept Medicaid insurance.

As your Board is likely aware, the aging population increasingly relies on area health resources. As the residents of our community age, so do their eyes. With this, visual impairment is increasingly common. In the near future, we expect there to be a significant increase in demand for ophthalmology services, due to the aging baby boomer population. Eye surgery requires specialized equipment, which most area surgical centers lack. The Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois will exclusively focus on eye procedures and will help meet our growing needs in Itasca.

Additionally, this facility will accept Medicaid patients and participate in area Medicaid plans. In doing so, the surgical center will fill an extensive coverage gap among members of our community. It is imperative for the continued success of our area businesses that residents be able to obtain the health care they need in our community.

The GOA Regional Business Association fully supports the proposed Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois. We respectfully ask that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board please approve this surgery center.

Sincerely,

  
Shirlanne Lemm  
President & CEO

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

Re: Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois, Itasca (Project No. 18-047)

Dear Ms. Avery,


Choose DuPage Economic Alliance is the economic development agency for DuPage County, Illinois. I am writing in support of efforts to open the Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois, Itasca. As the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board may be aware, some members of the area have difficulty accessing affordable health care and the area is home to a substantial aging population. Vision problems that require surgery are common in the elderly population. With these facts in mind, I strongly support the proposed eye surgery center and I respectfully urge you to approve Ophthalmology Surgery Center of Illinois.

Vision loss ranks as the third most common impairment worldwide. Millions of Americans live with visual impairment, and many more remain at risk for eye disease. Unfortunately, many common vision problems—glaucoma, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, and age-related macular degeneration—have no early symptoms or warning signs and tend to develop painlessly; therefore, adults may not notice changes in vision until the impairment is quite severe. Further, as a result of the aging baby boomer population, the incidence of age-related degenerative vision conditions is expected to increase significantly. In fact, studies have shown that 78% of adults age 55 or older report experiencing some form of vision impairment.

Currently, area surgery centers do not provide access to services for individuals who are insured under the Illinois Medicaid program. This provider has committed to doing so as the associated practice currently does. The proposed surgery center will provide residents in this area something they have not had access to previously—a dedicated ophthalmology surgery center that fully accepts Medicaid.

I applaud Dr. Kovach's effort and innovative spirit to increase access to ophthalmology services for residents throughout the state of Illinois. I urge the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to approve this surgery center and enable this provider to continue serving the growing number of ophthalmology patients in Illinois.

Sincerely,

  
John A. Carpenter  
President and CEO