



Highland

Chamber of Commerce

August 24, 2020

Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761
courtney.avery@illinois.gov

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AUG 27 2020

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Opposition to CON Application #20-017 – Metroeast Endoscopic Surgery Center

Dear Ms. Avery:

I respectfully oppose Project #20-017, which relies entirely on the redirection of existing outpatient orthopedic procedures performed at two rural hospitals, as representing the very definition of “unnecessary duplication of services.” The adverse consequences to our community, and its federally designated Critical Access Hospital, would be substantial and irreversible.

HSHS St. Joseph’s Hospital – Highland (SJH) has been a bedrock in our community for 142 years, having first opened in 1878. In addition to providing quality patient care and serving as an important source of local employment, throughout its history the hospital has weathered the challenges of the day. But none have been more significant than the current pandemic. State government has ordered that all hospitals suspend and reduce elective procedures, depriving this 25-bed Critical Access Hospital of significant revenue. The proposed redirection of all outpatient orthopedic surgeries away from SJH is both ill-timed and ill-advised.

The CON applicant has benefited from generous partnership with SJH in the form of robotic surgery equipment purchased and maintained by the hospital at the request of the involved surgery center practice group. Such collaboration is so critical to the success of rural health care, and should be protected rather than discarded. I sincerely hope that Review Board members will fully understand the negative impacts this CON application portends for our community, as well as the complete absence of any documented cost savings, and deny Project #20-017 as an unnecessary duplication of services.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancie Zobrist
Executive Director
Highland Chamber of Commerce

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