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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson, Chair
Illinois Health Facilities Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson, Second Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Dear Chairwoman Olson,

I am pleased to provide a letter of support for SwedishAmerican Hospital's CON application to modernize its existing facility and construct a new women's and children's tower, and its exemption application to add a Level III Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit.

On February 2, 2017, my husband Mark and I welcomed our beautiful baby girl Johanna into the world. We were expecting a healthy baby as she had reached full-term, but when she was born she wasn't able to get enough oxygen to breathe on her own and was immediately rushed back to the Special Care Nursery. This was an extremely scary situation for us but we made the best of it. They constantly checked Johanna's levels, tested her blood and monitored her closely. We basically lived at SwedishAmerican and established an extremely great connection with the nurses, they were like our second family.

Then one day we were informed that Johanna was not improving the way she should be so she was taken by ambulance to Mercyhealth's Level III NICU.

That was an awful day. We had to suddenly up and leave our "new home and new family members" and move to a brand-new home where we knew no one and where the trust hadn't been established yet. We felt alone and begged our provider to allow us to bring Johanna back to SwedishAmerican's Special Care Nursery. Everything felt extremely scary at Mercyhealth but when we were at Swedes everything felt extremely under control.

My husband and I wholeheartedly want to express our strong support for SwedishAmerican's proposed $130 million modernization and expansion and particularly the Level III Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit. It would be extremely beneficial for the parents of babies who are born early or who are born with special issues to be able to stay in the same exact hospital they were born in, where relationships are made and trust is established. It's awful to see your baby transferred in a so-called "toaster oven" to a brand new hospital where you know no one. It's heartbreaking and your whole world is completely turned upside down.

SwedishAmerican Hospital provides a warm, caring and loyal environment. What would make it even better and even more attractive is adding a Level III Neo-Natal Intensive Care Unit. My husband and I urge your swift approval of the CON and COE applications of SwedishAmerican Hospital.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Emily and Mark Christensen