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PUBLIC HEARING

FRANCISCAN ST. JAMES HEALTH-CHICAGO HEIGHTS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016

3:30 P.M.

BLOOM TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

101 WEST 10th STREET

CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS

PRESENT:

HEARING OFFICER JUAN MORADO

BOARD MEMBER RICHARD SEWELL

ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL JEANNIE MITCHELL

BOARD REVIEWER GEORGE ROATE

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Okay. We are going
2 to get started, if we can have everybody quiet
3 down for a moment.

4 Good afternoon. I am Juan Morado, Jr.,
5 hearing officer for the Illinois Health Facilities
6 and Services Review Board.

7 Present today is Board Member Richard
8 Sewell, Assistant General Counsel Jeannie
9 Mitchell, and the Board Reviewer George Roate, who
10 helped you guys sign in this afternoon.

11 On behalf of the Illinois Health
12 Facilities and Services Review Board, thank you
13 for attending this public hearing for Franciscan
14 St. James Health.

15 As per the rules of the Illinois Health
16 Facilities and Services Review Board, please note
17 that previous published legal notice is entered
18 into today's public record.

19 Exemption application 008-16, Franciscan
20 St. James Health Chicago Heights, in accordance
21 with the requirements of the Illinois Health
22 Facilities Planning Act, notice is given of a
23 receipt of an application to discontinue a 312-bed
24 acute care hospital located at 1423 Chicago Road,

1 Chicago Heights, Illinois. The application was
2 submitted by Franciscan Alliance Incorporated, and
3 Franciscan Alliance Incorporated doing business as
4 Franciscan St. James Health Chicago Heights,
5 1615 Dragoon Trail, Mishawaka, Indiana.

6 This exemption application for the
7 discontinuation of an acute care hospital was
8 declared complete on January 13, 2016.

9 A public hearing will be conducted by the
10 staff of the Illinois Health Facilities and
11 Services Review Board.

12 Pursuant to the Illinois Health
13 Facilities Planning Act, the hearing is open to
14 the public and it will afford an opportunity for
15 parties with interest to present written and/or
16 verbal comment relevant to the project. All
17 allegations or assertions should be relevant to
18 the need for the proposed project and be supported
19 with two copies of documentation or materials that
20 are printed or typed on paper, eight-and-a-half by
21 eleven.

22 The public hearing is taking place
23 pursuant to 20 ILCS 3960. The hearing is
24 scheduled for today from 3:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.,

1 with a one-hour intermission from 5:30 to
2 6:30 p.m.

3 Consideration by the State Board has been
4 tentatively scheduled for the March 29, 2016,
5 State Board meeting. Any person wanting to submit
6 written comments on this project must submit those
7 comments by March 9, 2016. The State Board will
8 post its findings in a State Board staff report,
9 and that report will be made available via the
10 Internet on March 15th, 2016. The public may
11 submit written responses in support or in
12 opposition to the findings of the Illinois Health
13 Facilities and Services Review Board. The public
14 will have until 9:00 a.m. on March 21st, 2016, to
15 respond.

16 As previously stated, this hearing is
17 open to the public and affords you an opportunity
18 to present written and/or oral comments relative
19 to the project.

20 Please note that in order to ensure that
21 the Health Facilities and Services Review Board
22 public hearings protect the privacy and maintain
23 the confidentiality of an individual's health
24 information, covered entities as defined by the

1 Health Assurance Portability and Accountability
2 Act of 1996, such as hospital providers, health
3 plans, health care clearing houses, submitting
4 oral or written testimony, that the protected
5 health information of individuals shall have a
6 valid written authorization from that individual,
7 the authorization shall cover to share the
8 individual's protected health information at this
9 hearing.

10 Again, if you haven't had an opportunity
11 to sign in, you can register your attendance by
12 filling out a white form, or if you would like to
13 speak, you can fill out a pink form, and the
14 sign-in now is going to be located right outside
15 that door.

16 Those of you who have prepared text of
17 your testimony, please note that you may submit
18 the written text only which will be entered into
19 the state record and made available to the Board
20 members prior to their Board meeting.

21 I ask that you please limit your
22 testimony today to two minutes. We have many
23 speakers here today, so we are going to be
24 limiting it to two minutes, and we will be asking

1 you to wrap up your comments once you hit that
2 mark.

3 We are going to be calling participants
4 in order. Prior to beginning your remarks, it is
5 very important that you please clearly state your
6 name and spell it for the court reporters. After
7 you have completed your remarks, if you haven't
8 already done so, please provide us with copies of
9 your comments.

10 Today's proceedings will begin with the
11 representative from Franciscan St. James Health.
12 I would like to call Arnie Kimmel to begin today's
13 testimony.

14 MR. KIMMEL: My name is Arnie Kimmel,
15 K-I-M-M-E-L, I am the CEO of Franciscan St. James
16 Health.

17 At the outset, I would like to thank
18 Mr. Sewell and Mr. Morado for conducting this
19 public hearing.

20 Franciscan St. James Health is a primary
21 service area of over 200,000 people, extending
22 beyond Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields,
23 throughout the South Side region.

24 As you may be aware, Franciscan St. James

1 requested that the Health Facilities and Services
2 Review Board conduct this public hearing, and this
3 represents the third hearing held on this project.
4 The first was conducted by a coalition of
5 interested Southland individuals. The second one
6 was conducted by Franciscan St. James. Each of
7 the prior hearings was attended by approximately
8 200 Southland residents.

9 The Sisters of Perpetual Adoration -- the
10 Franciscan Sisters of -- excuse me, the Sisters of
11 St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration have been
12 privileged to serve the residents of the Southland
13 region through their health ministry for 104
14 years, and, after considerable prayer and
15 reflection, renewed their commitment to the region
16 two years ago. With that recommitment came the
17 absolute need to seek technical guidance on how to
18 ensure that their commitment could be realized,
19 given the realities of health care delivery in the
20 21st Century.

21 Those realities include the Affordable
22 Care Act and the demands of third-party insurance
23 providers to provide outpatient alternatives to
24 traditional inpatient care, Franciscan St. James'

1 unwavering commitment to the provision of charity
2 care services, and the treatment of Medicaid
3 recipients.

4 Franciscan St. James is operating two
5 hospitals located 10 minutes apart, providing
6 redundant services, and operating in a combined
7 occupancy rate of about 40 percent. A hospital
8 that is 104 years old located on a landlocked
9 campus, and that requires 50 to \$70 million just
10 to correct the code deficiencies that would need
11 to be corrected. The need to address the
12 \$66 million in operating loss experienced between
13 2011 and 2014 so that we can continue our
14 unwritten 104-year-old mission. And finally, how
15 best to use our most contemporary facility, that
16 being our 35-year old hospital, Olympia Fields.

17 The plan that we've developed and
18 proposed in the applications that we have filed
19 with the Health Facilities and Services Review
20 Board is one that we believe best addresses those
21 realities.

22 The three components of our plan are,
23 first, we are proposing that the inpatient
24 services be consolidated in the newer hospital,

1 which I would suggest rivals any community
2 hospital in the metropolitan Chicago area in terms
3 of its physical capabilities and amenities.

4 Our obstetrics program and our inpatient
5 rehabilitation programs will move into a
6 newly-constructed pavilion on the Olympia Fields
7 site, existing support space will be reconfigured
8 to expand the medical/surgical capacity, and the
9 emergency room will be expanded, every patient
10 will have a private room.

11 Second, the Chicago Heights hospital will
12 become a center for the provision of many of the
13 outpatient services that were identified in our
14 most recent community needs survey, including the
15 addition of primary care physicians, the
16 establishment of a new diabetes center, a new
17 bariatric weight loss program, a new outpatient
18 behavioral medicine practice, and enhanced primary
19 care -- an enhanced primary care teaching clinic
20 serving the un and underinsured, an outpatient
21 pharmacy, and most importantly expanded and
22 renovated office space tied to our physician
23 recruitment program. Portions of the existing
24 building will either be repurposed or demolished

1 to make way for redevelopment, and we are
2 committed to working with the City of
3 Chicago Heights to make that happen.

4 Third, we are greatly expanding our
5 Urgent Care Center located a mile to the north of
6 the Chicago Heights hospital and also in
7 Chicago Heights. After recent conversations with
8 the mayor of Chicago Heights and other community
9 leaders, we've agreed that this facility must be
10 expanded and enhanced. The focus of that facility
11 will be its 24/7 physician-staffed urgent care
12 center, its outpatient rehabilitation program, and
13 its to-be-established behavioral health medicine
14 practice.

15 We are committed to working with our
16 local legislators, as well as EMS leaders and
17 others, regarding the transport of patients.
18 We've heard their concerns and will work
19 diligently to address them.

20 We recognize that with the closing of
21 facilities comes the anticipation of decreased
22 access. However, with the additional services,
23 facility expansions and enhancements already
24 mentioned, there will be far more of the health

1 care services people need on a regular basis than
2 there have ever been in Chicago Heights. For
3 practical purposes, the only reason a person
4 living in or around Chicago Heights would need to
5 get to Olympia Fields is to be admitted to the
6 hospital.

7 In addition, we are in conversation with
8 PACE, and we are both confident that there will be
9 improved public transportation to the campus.

10 None of these changes are going to come
11 overnight. The Chicago Heights hospital will
12 continue to provide all of its current services
13 for the next two-and-a-half years while the
14 Olympia Fields hospital and the outpatient center
15 expansions and renovations are completed. That
16 will also give us ample time to implement a
17 community education program and to work on plans
18 for the redevelopment of the Chicago Heights
19 campus.

20 The importance of today's hearing, from
21 my perspective, is to hear reasonable, realistic,
22 and constructive suggestions on how we can best
23 service Southland, given the challenges just
24 outlined.

1 With that, thank you for taking the time
2 in your busy day to be with us.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you. Thank
4 you.

5 I am going to call three individuals up.
6 The first speaker can come to the podium, and the
7 other two, we have a couple seats over there for
8 you, so we don't have people walking down the
9 aisle.

10 Our first speaker is going to be Richard
11 Gibb, followed by Tom Villanova, and then Kevin
12 Welsh.

13 MR. GIBB: Good afternoon. My name is Richard
14 Gibb, G-I-B-B, and I am a resident of
15 Olympia Fields, and the past president of Federal
16 Signal in University Park, with approximately
17 1,000 employees. We have many opportunities to
18 use the services of both Chicago Heights and
19 Olympia Fields hospitals. It is vitally important
20 that emergency services be available within a
21 10-to-15-minute driving radius. It is also a
22 quality of life contributor when residents of our
23 communities do not have to drive long distances
24 for the services of world-class hospitals.

1 I would like to thank the management of
2 Franciscan Alliance for suffering through
3 significant financial losses in the last few
4 years, while maintaining health services in our
5 area. I congratulate them on stemming large
6 losses and having the courage to address
7 much-needed restructuring.

8 Health care costs in America are out of
9 control and statistically do not compare well with
10 the quality of health care available in other
11 developed nations. A significant contributor to
12 health care costs is redundant services and
13 facilities. When two large hospitals with excess
14 bed capacity and duplicative services operate
15 within five miles of each other, there's an
16 opportunity to shut down one of those locations.

17 As an option, the management of
18 Franciscan St. James has developed a plan to
19 utilize both locations where large employee bases
20 are maintained. They should be congratulated for
21 this thoughtful approach and supported in their
22 transition plan. The plan will entail large
23 capital investments in Chicago Heights and
24 Olympia Fields, but should result in improved

1 health care and the potential for long-range
2 profitability.

3 We cannot and should not expect hospitals
4 to provide world-class services while suffering
5 losses, nor do we as consumers want to pay more
6 for services or have our taxes raised in order to
7 subsidize their operations.

8 I encourage the Illinois Health
9 Facilities and Services Review Board to quickly
10 approve their plan, and I encourage our
11 communities to support their initiative.

12 Thank you.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

14 MR. VILLANOVA: Good afternoon. My name is
15 Tom Villanova. V-I-L-L-A-N-O-V-A. I have the
16 privilege and the honor of being the President of
17 Chicago and Cook County Building & Construction
18 Trades Council. Our Council represents 100,000
19 hard-working men and women from 24 affiliated
20 organizations in the union construction industry.

21 I am here today to support the proposed
22 \$137 million investment that Franciscan St. James
23 plans to make in the Chicago Heights and
24 Olympia Fields campuses. This expansion,

1 redevelopment, and improvement will continue to
2 provide economic stimulus to a geographic area
3 that's long felt the effects of a slowing economy
4 and a government in gridlock.

5 Projects like this one provide good union
6 jobs for our members who live, work, pay taxes,
7 and raise their families in the Southland. It's
8 important to keep our union tradesmen working and
9 providing valuable skills to our communities.

10 We have worked with Tonn & Blank
11 Construction before, the firm retained by
12 Franciscan St. James. We are confident that this
13 project will be a good union job site. Our union
14 affiliates will provide highly-specialized trained
15 men and women who will bring their leadership and
16 expertise to this project.

17 Once again, I repeat, I am here in
18 support of this project. Thank you for your time.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

20 FIRE CHIEF WELSH: My name is Kevin Welsh. I
21 am the Fire Chief of the Village of Glenwood. I
22 am also President of our Mutual Aid Association,
23 MABAS Division 24, representing 20 fire
24 departments in this region.

1 I come here today to express our deep
2 concern for the loss of the emergency room on the
3 corner of Route 30 and Chicago Road. I do have to
4 back up and applaud the upper administration of
5 the Franciscans for coming to the table and
6 recognizing our voice, we've had some very
7 productive talks over the last few days. I wish
8 it would have begun sooner.

9 However, it remains our concern that the
10 increase in transportation times, the ability to
11 get you to advanced care, or upper levels of care,
12 in a quick fashion will be devastated by the loss
13 of the emergency room on the corner of Route 30
14 and Chicago Road. We have no other dog in this
15 race, so to speak.

16 We simply implore the Sisters, the
17 administration, to please consider our ability to
18 serve our residents, and after the decisions are
19 all made, my fellow fire chiefs will be forced to
20 make those adjustments that we are all are looking
21 at now in contingency planning, but may create
22 longer travel times, may create back ups in our
23 bypass system of the hospitals, and we need all
24 these considerations looked at as we move forward

1 in the plan.

2 Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Next up we can have
4 have Bill Klein, Steve DeJong, and Chief Chris
5 Schwalbe.

6 MR. KLEIN: Hello. My name is Will Klein.
7 K-L-E-I-N. I am a Vice-President with Tonn and
8 Blank Construction, a construction and
9 construction management firm with a large
10 portfolio of hospital and health care projects.

11 Tonn and Blank was engaged early last
12 year to evaluate the conditions of the
13 Chicago Heights' hospital's structural,
14 mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems, and
15 provide our opinion as to the cost that might be
16 required to keep the facility operational and safe
17 for the public in coming years.

18 Among our findings were at least 12 large
19 air handling units, the chiller units serving
20 surgery, the center tower transformer, the entire
21 electrical surge protection system, the east
22 building's generator, the waste water risers, the
23 utility tunnels, and the parking deck are all in
24 need of replacement.

1 Also, only 40 percent of the building is
2 currently covered by fire protection sprinkler
3 systems. The brick veneer is literally falling
4 off of north tower, as we speak. The grounding
5 system is in need of major upgrades. Many of the
6 inpatient units are obsolete functionally, they
7 were built with double loaded corridors instead of
8 a center core for efficient nursing and support
9 functions, as in a modern hospital. The elevators
10 are very old with analog control systems that must
11 be soon upgraded to digital systems and further
12 code improvements. Light fixtures in many areas
13 do not meet current technology or energy codes and
14 must be replaced.

15 In summary, the hospital will have to
16 expend as much as \$70 million over the next five
17 to 10 years just to stay ahead of major mechanical
18 breakdowns and stay current with codes to keep the
19 doors open. At that point, they would still have
20 a facility that is over 100 years old in places
21 with the newest areas being at least 40 years old.

22 Thank you very much.

23 DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF DeJONG: Hello. My name is
24 Steve DeJong, D-e-J-O-N-G, I am the Deputy Chief

1 of the Homewood Fire Department.

2 I want to echo some of the concerns with
3 the fire chief and the emergency responders within
4 this area of how critical this campus is. For
5 transport from the Village of Homewood, it is the
6 closest transport facility for ALS care for
7 patients from the South Side of town.

8 Again, as Chief Welsh said, as what some
9 of the other chiefs are going to say, we
10 understand the physical concerns, but what we're
11 looking for, what we need as emergency response
12 for our residents and all the residents of the
13 south suburbs, we need somewhere that we can bring
14 them and transport to, some sort of a freestanding
15 ER, something more than just an urgent care
16 center.

17 We understand the concerns the hospital
18 is facing. However, we also have concerns where
19 most of the south suburbs are facing 2,000-plus
20 ambulance calls a year, at the average, and we
21 need somewhere to transport them to.
22 Additionally, with longer transport times, longer
23 response times coming back, backups in the
24 hospital, and longer time for our patients to

1 actually meet the care that they need.

2 So what we would like is to ask for
3 consideration of a facility that we can still
4 transport to, to meet the needs of the citizens of
5 the South Side.

6 Thank you.

7 FIRE CHIEF SCHWALBE: Thank you for the
8 opportunity to speak. My name is Chris Schwalbe,
9 S-C-H-W-A-L-B-E, I am the Fire Chief with the
10 Village of Matteson.

11 As Fire Chief of the Village of Matteson,
12 I am opposed to this application at this time, to
13 discontinue emergency and critical health care
14 services in Chicago Heights. The Village of
15 Matteson has over 19,000 residents and we run over
16 2,250 emergency medical calls per year. Calls are
17 trending at two to four percent increase year over
18 year.

19 More than doubling the amount of
20 ambulance traffic is proposed through the
21 Olympia Fields campus, regardless of the
22 improvements proposed, will increase delays in
23 getting ambulances back on the street and back to
24 their community for the next call. We always have

1 to worry about the next call. As emergency
2 medical providers, delay pressure on the entire
3 system results in increased calls from each delay
4 and, thereby, increasing the response times to
5 those within our communities for dialing 911 for
6 emergency medical rescue.

7 More than doubling the amount of
8 ambulances traveling through the proffered
9 Governors Lincoln Highway intersection, which is
10 where the majority of these calls will go through,
11 is in my jurisdiction. This will create hazards
12 and increase motor vehicle accidents for all
13 travelers, including the ambulance crews and their
14 patients.

15 More than doubling the amount of
16 ambulance traffic will increase the potential for
17 motor vehicle accidents and delays, as all feeder
18 roads around Olympia Fields have only one lane in
19 each direction and no traffic signal control in or
20 out of any of those driveways.

21 As you know, around Chicago Heights
22 campus, there happens to be two lanes in every
23 direction, with turn lanes and signal traffic
24 control.

1 Increase staffing costs are also a
2 concern that fill the gaps when we have to answer
3 calls, we will have to look at our budgets as far
4 as our villages to try and increase staffing,
5 because there will be gaps.

6 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
7 comments.

8 FIRE CHIEF SCHWALBE: As you can see,
9 sometimes two plus two does not equal four.
10 35,000 patients a year at Olympia Fields, 40,000
11 at Chicago Heights, does not necessarily equal
12 75,000 at Olympia Fields when it's improved.

13 The proposed construction is 82,000, in
14 two years they are going to cut the ribbon, and we
15 will already be at capacity. That is my concerns.

16 Thank you.

17 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

18 Next up we are going to call Mary Teykl,
19 William Preston, and Eric Bihl.

20 MS. TEYKL: Good afternoon. My name is Mary
21 Teykl, T-E-Y-K-L, and I am a lifelong south
22 suburban resident. I grew up in Chicago Heights
23 and I currently reside in Flossmoor.

24 I wish to express my support for the plan

1 to consolidate inpatient care at the
2 Olympia Fields campus with St. James.

3 I, too, am disappointed that services
4 provided at the Chicago Heights campus will be
5 different than those currently in place. My
6 children were all born there. We have emotional
7 attachments to the hospital. The reality we face
8 now is that if the proposed changes do not take
9 place, we may not have any care at all in
10 Chicago Heights or Olympia Fields.

11 At the community meeting held in January
12 in Matteson, it was stated that over 80 percent of
13 emergency room visits were for non-emergency care.
14 The plan to provide more primary care doctors in
15 Chicago Heights puts the services that are needed
16 in the place they need to be. We want health care
17 to be about taking care of people. It takes money
18 to do that. You can't keep throwing dollars into
19 a system that cannot support both facilities.

20 The hospital says it will take \$70
21 million to upgrade the Chicago Heights building.
22 \$70 million can be better spent putting a system
23 in place to get the people the level of care they
24 actually need. We need to make sure that as a

1 community, we use the care we have appropriately.
2 Use the emergency room for emergencies. Go to the
3 doctor's office for preventive care. And if you
4 need that doctor's office after hours, we have
5 urgent care to fill that need.

6 We all want to make sure that our
7 families and our neighbors have a place to go for
8 health care, but if we don't support this plan,
9 then St. James may not be here for us at all. Do
10 we really want to be in that position? I don't.

11 I support the plan of the Chicago Heights
12 facility so that St. James can continue to provide
13 health care for the next hundred years.

14 Thank you.

15 MR. PRESTON: Hello. My name is William
16 Preston. P-R-E-S-T-O-N.

17 Back in December, Mr. Kimmel had notified
18 the south suburbs that the Chicago Heights
19 facility was no longer a cost-effective operation.
20 So I am wondering, I am not assuming voting no,
21 but I'm just -- when in doubt, I have to vote no.
22 I was wondering, how cost effective is calculated?
23 To me, the only the only legitimate calculation
24 for hospital in cost effectiveness is how many

1 lives are saved per dollars spent.

2 Cornell University indicated that for
3 every five minutes in distance to a hospital, a
4 person's probability to get to the hospital in
5 time falls by one-quarter percent. So will more
6 lives be saved overall by moving emergency
7 operations?

8 It would seem that a non-profit with a
9 goal of maximizing health care would use funds
10 from the high-income hospitals to help subsidize
11 hospitals with lower incomes, and hospitals will
12 be placed in areas of greatest need, not the
13 greatest revenue.

14 According to the application for
15 exemption that the hospital filed, the cost of
16 charity care at St. James went from 7.6 million in
17 2012 to 19 million in 2014. That's more than
18 doubled. This was not due to the growing number
19 of patients, the patients went down from 21,000 to
20 15,600, which is obviously due to increased cost.

21 In the U.S. for the past several decades,
22 while the non-profits have been struggling to make
23 ends meet, hospital CEO compensation has kept
24 going up. According to an article in Modern

1 Healthcare, total cash compensation for non-profit
2 hospital CEOs grew an average of 24.2 percent from
3 2011 to 2012. One year. Of those, 14 percent saw
4 their cash compensation rise by more than 50
5 percent in one year while the hospitals are
6 struggling. The average 2012 compensation for
7 CEOs of non-profit hospitals is point two million
8 dollars.

9 Mr. Kimmel, you can advise us of what
10 your compensation is.

11 So in our country --

12 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
13 comments.

14 MR. PRESTON: -- we have the most expensive
15 health care in the world, but we perform worse
16 than 11 other similar countries. Not even the top
17 10. Twenty-five percent administrative costs, the
18 U.S. is the highest in administrative costs for
19 health care. Scotland and Canada have the lowest.
20 If the United States had the same administrative
21 costs as Canada, then we would have saved \$150
22 billion in administrative costs in 2011.

23 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
24 comments, sir.

1 MR. PRESTON: Okay, last comment.

2 So I think my concern is how do you
3 calculate cost effectiveness? I don't think you
4 should in any way put CEO compensation, insurance
5 profitability, pharma profitability, these have no
6 business at all in your calculation for whether or
7 not the hospital is cost effective. It's how many
8 lives are saved per dollar, period, bottom line.

9 And I saw in 2012 --

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you very much,
11 sir.

12 MR. PRESTON: -- Chicago Heights was 66
13 percent capacity, 20 million in charity health
14 care. I think that shows a need for a hospital in
15 the area.

16 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

17 MR. BIHL: Hi. My name is Eric Bihl.
18 B-I-H-L. I've been a business owner in
19 Chicago Heights since 1993. I am a lifelong
20 resident of the south suburbs. Two of my sons
21 were born at the Chicago Heights campus, and my
22 dad died there.

23 I was working there when President Reagan
24 spoke right here, and the hospital had an entire

1 floor ready for him if needed.

2 I was at the 100-year celebration of
3 St. James. I get the emotional connection.

4 But like in most states, change is
5 inevitable, and it's certainly true for health
6 care. Medical advancements, economic upheavals,
7 societal changes, and federal health care policy
8 changes have resulted in significant changes in
9 health care delivery systems. Hospitals all over
10 the -- all over are pressed to deliver better,
11 more efficient and cost-effective care. Over the
12 past 15 or so years, more than a third of
13 Chicagoland hospitals have closed their doors.

14 Franciscan St. James has demonstrated its
15 compassionate care for this community for over 100
16 years and is committed to continuing doing so, but
17 it must move the acute care services at the
18 Chicago Heights campus to remain viable into the
19 future. They have budgeted to spend another \$137
20 million to upgrade and add services at the
21 Olympia Fields campus, which is only a 10-minute
22 drive away. The spending will be a boost to the
23 local economy and it will keep Franciscan
24 St. James as one of the largest employers in the

1 area.

2 I fully endorse St. James' restructuring
3 plan.

4 I thank you for the opportunity to speak.

5 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

6 Next up we are going to call Mayor Bob
7 Kolosh, Bishop Dr. Billy Graham, and Doris
8 Williams.

9 MAYOR KOLOSH: Good afternoon, everybody.
10 First of all, I would like to introduce myself.
11 I'm Bob Kolosh, I'm the mayor of Thornton, and I'm
12 also the Public Safety Chairman for South Suburban
13 Mayors & Managers.

14 I would just like to read a statement
15 from South Suburban Mayors & Managers on the
16 consolidation of St. James.

17 The South Suburban Mayors & Managers
18 Association represents 44 communities and 650,000
19 people in Southern Cook and Will Counties.
20 Approximately two weeks ago, our Public Safety
21 Committee, chaired by myself of Thornton, held an
22 information meeting on the proposal by Franciscan
23 St. James concerning the Chicago Heights and
24 Olympia Fields campuses. Nearly 100 mayors,

1 village managers, public safety personnel, and
2 others attended this meeting.

3 Subsequent to that meeting, the Executive
4 Committee of South Suburban Mayors & Managers met
5 to discuss the issue and have authorized me to
6 make the following public statement.

7 South Suburban Mayors & Managers very
8 much appreciate the public health service provided
9 by Franciscan St. James Olympia Fields and
10 Chicago Heights, and the proposed investment and
11 upgrades to the facilities. We also understand
12 that difficult decisions need to be made. While
13 South Suburban Mayors & Managers supports much of
14 what is being proposed by Franciscan St. James, we
15 cannot support the closing of the emergency room
16 in Chicago Heights based upon our current
17 information.

18 A number of our mayors, public and
19 private ambulance operators, and our residents
20 have grave concerns that the plan can adequately
21 provide timely access to residents south and east
22 of St. James Olympia Fields, and that the proposed
23 ER facility in Olympia Fields will have adequate
24 capacity to serve the doubling of visits to the

1 Olympia Fields ER. Should the expanded
2 Olympia Fields ER not have adequate capacity at
3 times and go on bypass, this will create
4 additional time when the ambulances are out of our
5 municipalities and not in service to our community
6 residents.

7 The South Suburban Mayors & Managers
8 would instead propose that the Hospital Facilities
9 Board, all hospitals and health care facilities in
10 the Southland and Cook County Hospital, join with
11 our mayors, state legislators, Governor Rauner,
12 President Toni Preckwinkle, and County
13 Commissioners to explore the establishment of a
14 Level 1 trauma center for the Southland in Chicago
15 Heights.

16 All reports confirm that the need for a
17 Level 1 trauma center in the southern suburbs is
18 greatly needed, and by working together this can
19 be the opportunity to achieve this critical need.
20 We pledge our support to help make this happen.

21 Thank you.

22 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: One more time,
23 Bishop Dr. Billy Graham, you can come down. Doris
24 Williams, you can step up. We have Mark Fritsch,

1 and Trinette Britt Johnson.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Hi. Good evening. My name is
3 Doris Williams. I am a lifelong resident of
4 Chicago Heights, former union steward teamster,
5 SEIU Local 73. I worked at the University of
6 Chicago for more than 20 years, so I am well aware
7 of restructuring.

8 I believe -- I am against this proposal,
9 because I believe it will increase the number of
10 deaths due to the amount of time that it will take
11 to get to the new facility. The Olympia Fields
12 hospital cannot handle accidents that are
13 occurring right on Route 57. I live on the
14 East Side community, which is surrounded by
15 industry, such as Ford Motor Company and other
16 chemicals. So if there's a HAZMAT condition or
17 some type of emergency, these things will not be
18 able to be handled within a proper manner.

19 You will also have job losses, which will
20 have a negative impact upon families. They state
21 that it will take 70 million to rebuild the
22 current facility, but yet they are going to spend
23 over 40 million to tear it down. Then why would
24 you waste a million dollars to repair the bricks

1 on the building that you say you are going to tear
2 down? To me, that's a waste of money.

3 It is stated that they're going to tear
4 down the hospital to give us a clinic. Why would
5 we want to give up a hospital for a clinic? The
6 current urgent care center does not take County
7 Care, which is what a lot of people have. So why
8 would you want a clinic that you can't use?

9 I provide free emergency counseling for
10 homeless women and children, victims of domestic
11 violence, in the ministries. We also have a
12 shelter, pharmacy, and clinic at my church, which
13 is St. Bethel Missionary Baptist Church. So we
14 are very much aware of the impact it will have on
15 patient appointments. Most of these clinics are
16 feeling overwhelmed by the numbers. There's no
17 transportation to Olympia Fields.

18 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
19 comments.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: This will be the death of our
21 community if this proposal goes forth, and various
22 lives will be impacted. No negative impact study
23 has been made available in regards to the
24 detrimental effects it will have on our community

1 and surrounding communities that depends upon
2 volunteer fire departments. Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

4 Trinette Britt here?

5 Sir, you can go ahead.

6 DR. FRITSCH: Good afternoon. I am Dr. Mark
7 Fritsch. That's F-R-I-T-S-C-H. First, a little
8 bit about my background so you understand why I
9 feel that I am qualified to speak to the proposal.

10 I am President of the 24 Physician
11 Medical Groups, so I certainly understand the
12 harsh economic realities of practicing health
13 care, delivering health care in the 21st Century,
14 and even more important than that, the importance
15 of providing quality health care.

16 I have practiced at one of the Sisters of
17 St. Francis hospitals for almost 32 years now. So
18 I understand their -- and I fully appreciate how
19 devoted they are to providing quality care to
20 everybody in the community, rich, poor, or middle
21 class alike.

22 I have been practicing solely at the
23 Chicago Heights campus at St. James for the past
24 25 years. I've served as president of its medical

1 staff. So I feel that I know it as well as
2 anybody does, the hospital, the medical staff, the
3 administration, and the community that we serve.

4 And knowing all of that, I can state
5 unequivocally that it's my strong opinion that
6 this proposal is in the best interest of the
7 residents of Olympia Fields, Chicago Heights, and
8 all of the south suburbs.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

11 MS. BRITT-JOHNSON: Good afternoon. My name
12 is Trinette, T-R-I-N-E-T-T-E, Britt, B-R-I-T-T,
13 Johnson. I am a resident of the Village of
14 Olympia Fields, and I am also the Chairwoman for
15 the Village of Olympia Fields Economic Development
16 Committee. I've lived in the Southland for 13
17 years.

18 I believe we should recognize the role
19 that Franciscan Alliance has played for over a
20 century in terms of providing health care services
21 to the entire Southland region. Health care is
22 not delivered in the same way that it was 10, 20,
23 30 years ago.

24 The issues being raised by

1 Chicago Heights are not germane to
2 Chicago Heights. They are Southland issues. Not
3 working with Franciscan St. James could possibly
4 lead to no health care alternatives of no
5 facilities, if both facilities are closed, because
6 we are not supporting the plan.

7 We should work with and support
8 Franciscan St. James on their \$137 million
9 redevelopment of both the Chicago Heights and
10 Olympia Fields campuses, the recruitment of more
11 doctors to our community, and the development of
12 additional health care alternatives to our region.

13 I fully support the plans that they have
14 laid out, and support working with them to improve
15 the access for the entire region.

16 Thank you.

17 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

18 Can I ask Demitrous Cook, Patrick Ormsby,
19 and Julie Mulholland to step up. Thank you.

20 CHIEF COOK: Good evening. My name is
21 Demitrous Cook. I am the President of the South
22 Suburban Emergency Response Team, which is the
23 SWAT Team for South Cook County. I am also the
24 Chief of Police for the Village of Glenwood.

1 I am opposed to the closing of this
2 facility, because it's a great facility and it
3 provides great service, and it's vital to our
4 community. The SWAT Team serves over 600,000
5 residents in South Cook County. We serve over 40
6 suburban agencies in this area, and we cover 150
7 square miles. The South Suburban Emergency
8 Response Team is the largest SWAT Team in
9 Illinois. We are mandated to run the SWAT school
10 for Illinois, which we have members from
11 Cook County attend, DEA, and suburban departments
12 from all across Chicagoland.

13 Now, my issue with the closing of the
14 hospital, I understand financial efficiency, but I
15 want to know from a medical perspective, how does
16 this affect operations with SWAT when there's a
17 mass casual situation? I know without a Level 1
18 trauma center in the south suburbs, proximity is
19 everything, how close hospitals are spread apart
20 will mean that greater life can be saved if they
21 kept them in the position that they are now.

22 So from a certain perspective, I think
23 that we need to look at mass casualty. We are in
24 the process of training with the State Police, we

1 are training with Cook County SWAT, and we are
2 using larger venues now for our training in
3 preparation for mass casualty. We utilize the
4 Carson's that's over in Chicago Heights -- I am
5 sorry, in Calumet City, and we just secured the
6 mall over in Matteson, Lincoln Mall, for some of
7 our training, because we are trying to be in
8 preparation for the mitigation of these violent
9 crimes in these large venues, like this school
10 right here.

11 So I think that life is greater of good,
12 when you look at life versus operational
13 efficiency, and I pray that St. James consider --
14 reconsiders their position with the closure of
15 this hospital. Thank you very much.

16 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

17 MR. ORMSBY: Good afternoon. My name is
18 Patrick Ormsby, O-R-M-S-B-Y, and I am the
19 President of Bimba Manufacturing Company. I am
20 also a member of the Board of Directors of the
21 Franciscan St. James Foundation, which raises
22 money to help the hospital.

23 Bimba Manufacturing is an employee-owned
24 company with approximately 600 employees. Our

1 corporate headquarters are in University Park,
2 about seven miles south of the Franciscan
3 St. James Olympia Fields campus, where we have 300
4 employees.

5 Since many of our employees use the
6 Franciscan St. James facilities, as well as any
7 injured employees that might require emergency
8 treatment, we are in favor of the restructuring
9 plan, because we feel it will make St. James in
10 Olympia Fields an enhanced ER and a better
11 hospital. Also, because Franciscan St. James is
12 one of the largest employers in the area, it's
13 important to the entire area that they do whatever
14 is necessary to have financial stability and
15 remain viable.

16 As a long-time resident of the area, over
17 60 years, I know I don't look that old, I have a
18 keen appreciation for St. James in Chicago Heights
19 and a soft spot in my heart. You see, three of my
20 children were born there, so I understand the
21 emotion surrounding the restructuring plan, but I
22 believe it's an excellent strategic plan designed
23 to enhance the capabilities of Franciscan St.
24 James which will benefit the Southland community

1 for many years to come.

2 Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

4 MS. MULHOLLAND: Hello. My name is Julie
5 Mulholland, M-U-L-H-O-L-L-A-N-D, and I am
6 currently the Vice-President of Clinical Services
7 for Franciscan St. James. I've worked at
8 St. James for over 28 years.

9 While I've worked for the Sisters of
10 St. Francis all this time, I also call the
11 Southland my home. I understand the emotional
12 nature of the proposed plan. I've heard many
13 concerns from family and friends, and am troubled
14 by the misinformation that has been distributed.
15 We are committed to providing access to those in
16 need, who need it most. While inpatient and ER
17 services are being proposed to move to the
18 Olympia Fields campus, the expansion of
19 outpatient services on the Chicago Heights campus
20 is a direct response to community needs. We
21 understand health care is moving in this
22 direction, and the proposed plan positions
23 Franciscan St. James Health to be sustainable and
24 present in our community well into the future.

1 Additionally, we now know that the number
2 one issue right now for local political and EMS
3 leaders is the transportation of many of their
4 patients. I have been in these conversations, and
5 I am confident that we can address these concerns.
6 Currently, we average 42 EMT runs a day, which is
7 approximately two per hour. While I am sure you
8 will hear from the EMS leaders tonight about that
9 volume, our data clearly confirms that no
10 community, outside of Chicago Heights, makes more
11 than one run per day to the Chicago Heights
12 campus. That volume is manageable and I am
13 confident we can ensure their patients are
14 delivered to the emergency room in a timely manner
15 and that we will get their ambulances back into
16 their communities as efficiently and quickly as
17 possible.

18 I am grateful for the chance to speak
19 publicly tonight in support of the proposed
20 project, not just because I work at Franciscan
21 St. James, but because it's my community and my
22 hospital for me and my family.

23 Thank you.

24 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

1 I am going to ask Pamela Hausser, Richard
2 Greep, and Richard Parker to please step up.

3 MS. HAUSSER: Hello. My name is Pamela
4 Hausser, H-A-U-S-S-E-R, and I am a resident of
5 Dyer, formally of Park Forest, and I've proudly
6 been an employee of St. James for over 25 years.
7 I've seen a lot of transition.

8 I would like to start by saying my first
9 experience at St. James was as a patient. I can
10 happily say that one of the best days of my life
11 was spent at St. James giving birth to my
12 beautiful daughter Emily. I can also say that
13 St. James took care of and saved my mom's life
14 more than once. My mom was a fighter who
15 triumphed over cancer and beat that horrible
16 disease. She also had a triple bypass, knee and
17 hip replacement surgeries over the years.
18 Unfortunately, cancer knows no mercy and it came
19 back 10 years later in another form and sadly took
20 my mom in October of last year.

21 My family and I have entrusted the care
22 of my mother and other family members to
23 St. James, because we believe in St. James. We
24 believe in the Sisters' mission, and have

1 witnessed their Franciscan tradition in action.

2 I am thankful and proud to be a part of
3 the Franciscan Alliance family and will be forever
4 grateful for the compassionate care, respect for
5 life, and joyful service that was afforded to me
6 and my family.

7 The changes that have been made to
8 survive for our future are hard ones for all of
9 us, but necessary in order to maintain a presence
10 in the Southland and to continue the Sisters'
11 mission that has never been forgotten.

12 We believe if St. Francis was here today,
13 he would say "Well done, my good and faithful
14 servants. Well done."

15 Thank you.

16 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

17 MR. GREEP: Hello. My name is Richard Grep.
18 G-R-E-E-P. I was born and raised right down the
19 street here on Franklin Avenue. I grew up working
20 for my family's NAPA Auto Parts store over on
21 Western Avenue. I went to grade school at
22 St. Agnes in Chicago Heights, and graduated right
23 here from this high school, Bloom, 1984.

24 Although I've only worked for the Sisters

1 for a few months, I feel privileged to be back
2 here at St. James and be part of the mission to
3 help serve my family and friends here in
4 Chicago Heights.

5 When I was researching employment at the
6 Franciscan Alliance, I was amazed at the support
7 and dedication to the health care of the people in
8 the surrounding communities. I was excited to get
9 the opportunity to become part of that mission.

10 I support the consolidation of services
11 and expansion of the express care and other
12 services to better serve my family and friends
13 right here in the south suburban communities.

14 Thank you and God bless.

15 MR. PARKER: My name is Rick Parker.
16 P-A-R-K-E-R. I've worked in Information Services
17 at St. James for almost 17 years. My daughter and
18 her mother also work for Franciscan Alliance in
19 the Northern Indiana region. Combined, we have
20 over 50 years of service to the Sisters, and we
21 believe in their mission.

22 My mother was a patient a few years ago
23 at St. James and received very good care. She
24 also spent her final days in the hospice of

1 St. James where she received very compassionate
2 care.

3 I believe the changes St. James is making
4 will ensure the Sisters' mission will continue for
5 the next 100 years and remain viable in the
6 Chicago Southland.

7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: The next speakers are
9 Ed Campbell, Renee Diskin, and Sister Petra
10 Nielsen.

11 If you have comments that you need to
12 turn in when you are done speaking, if you can go
13 ahead and leave them right here on the stage, we
14 will collect them. Thank you.

15 MR. CAMPBELL: God afternoon to the Review
16 Board and the community at large. My name is he
17 Ed C-A-M-P-B-E-L-L.

18 Again, my name is Ed Campbell, I am the
19 Public Relations Director for Wake and
20 Alternatives. I am also a business owner in the
21 area, and also live in the Southland.

22 Wake and Alternatives is a health care
23 management company. We work with insurers and
24 hospital systems, and we actively research health

1 trends and consult on improving health outcomes.
2 We support the consolidation of the inpatient
3 services as an appropriate cost savings measure,
4 considering that the two hospitals are just five
5 miles apart.

6 We understand the need for St. James to
7 be competitive with other hospitals in the area,
8 and a duplication of services is no longer
9 effective management of available resources.

10 Enhancing and expanding the
11 Olympia Fields campus range of available services
12 helps to attract the best providers and also new
13 clients. I know we all want to be in the best
14 hospital systems.

15 Additionally, we believe that focus on
16 preventive health programs and bolstering primary
17 care services are keeping with today's health care
18 trends and best practices.

19 When you think of hospitals in Illinois,
20 I would guess -- actually, I would prefer to
21 venture that many of you in this room view
22 hospitals like Northwestern, University of
23 Chicago, and Rush Presbyterian as best of
24 institutions. Best cardiology. Best obstetrics

1 and gynecology. Best cancer management.

2 This restructuring plan gives St. James
3 Health an opportunity, a chance to be the best of
4 in the Southland. As a long-term resident of the
5 Southland, this is the kind of hospital that I
6 want in my area and I hope you want it, too.

7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

9 Sister Petra Nielsen.

10 SR. NIELSEN: Good evening. My name is Sister
11 Petra, P-E-T-R-A, Nielsen, N-I-E-L-S-E-N, and I am
12 Vice-President for Mission Integration at
13 Franciscan St. James Health, and a member of the
14 Sisters of St. Francis Perpetual Adoration, the
15 founding congregation of Franciscan Alliance.

16 For more than 100 years, Franciscan
17 St. James has stayed true to the Sisters' mission
18 to care for everyone who comes through our doors,
19 regardless of ability to pay. We take our mission
20 of continuing Christ's ministry in our Franciscan
21 tradition seriously every day, where there's a
22 need, our staff and our physicians work to fill
23 it, extending compassionate and loving care beyond
24 the four walls of our hospitals.

1 It is our sincere belief that each person
2 possesses inherent dignity and that we are called
3 to not only treat the acute medical needs that
4 come to us, but also to work towards ensuring the
5 health and well-being of the communities in which
6 we are blessed to serve. We do this to provide
7 preventive and follow-up care, and working with
8 organizations aligned with our mission to minister
9 other needs in the community.

10 Franciscan St. James' plan to change our
11 hospital campuses does not change our dedication
12 to care for all regardless of ability to pay or to
13 meet the needs of our community as identified in
14 our community health needs assessment. That will
15 never change. That dedication is reflected in our
16 commitment to increase the number of primary care
17 physicians, as well as the diabetes care, and
18 other services in the community in order to
19 improve preventive and follow-up care, and to
20 expand our Franciscan Primary Care Clinic for
21 patients who are uninsured and underinsured.

22 Our proposed restructuring plan will
23 ensure that the Sisters' mission can continue in
24 the south suburbs of Chicago, and that we will be

1 able to minister to those in need in this area for
2 many years to come.

3 I ask for your prayers and support as we
4 work to continue our mission. Please know that
5 the Sisters are praying for you as well.

6 Thank you and God bless you.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

8 Next up we have Renee Diskin, Susan Linn,
9 and Sheree Boyd.

10 Miss Diskin.

11 The next speaker can come on up.

12 We can have Karen Yates come and pick a
13 seat.

14 MS. LINN: Good afternoon. My name is Susan
15 Linn, L-I-N-N, and I am the Executive Director of
16 the Franciscan Alliance Foundation South Suburban
17 Chicago Region, and our mission is to raise money
18 for the hospital.

19 I want you to know that I am a long-time
20 resident -- actually, a lifetime resident of the
21 Chicago Southland, and I have been a patient at
22 St. James Hospital on more than one occasion. Two
23 times I was admitted to the hospital due to
24 life-threatening situations. On both occasions I

1 had to travel from Richton Park to
2 Chicago Heights, and in neither instance did I, or
3 my family, think that 20-minute travel time was a
4 threat to the outcome of the emergency. We were
5 just grateful to have a hospital there for us.

6 I tell you this because I am concerned
7 that if this Board does not approve the
8 restructuring plan permitting St. James to
9 consolidate, the quality of health care I relied
10 on will be greatly diminished. I don't think
11 there is anyone in this room who believes that the
12 hospital can thrive by being forced to duplicate
13 costly services, like surgical units and emergency
14 departments.

15 I implore you to improve the
16 restructuring plans so that St. James can redirect
17 its resources that are currently being used on
18 duplicative services towards primary care and
19 community services that are designed to keep all
20 of us healthy and out of the hospital.

21 Thank you.

22 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

23 MS. BOYD: Hello. My name is Sheree Boyd.

24 That's B-O-Y-D. I am the Director of Clinical

1 Operations for Specialty Physicians of Illinois.
2 I have lived in this community for over 25 years,
3 and have sought out care at both St. James
4 Hospital in Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields.

5 I can't take away the angst that people
6 are feeling, but I can assure you that providing
7 quality care for families in this community is our
8 number one priority. We are committed to the
9 community and will increase our visibility at the
10 Chicago Heights campus with expanded primary care
11 services, bariatrics, diabetes services, and
12 outpatient pharmacy. We will continue to service
13 those patients utilizing the Franciscan Express
14 Care location on Dixie Highway with an increase in
15 hours of operation to 24 hours, 7 days a week. We
16 will provide a more robust level of service for
17 those needing more acute care.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. YATES: Good evening. My name is Karen
20 Yates. I am the Director of Mission Integration
21 at Franciscan St. James. I've worked at St. James
22 for 36 years, and witness our mission in action
23 every single day.

24 Franciscan St. James Health fulfills its

1 mission in ways that may be unknown to our
2 neighbors. Many people don't realize that when
3 someone comes into the hospital for care, we
4 become aware of things they need, like a warm
5 coat, or when they are discharged, they are going
6 to a home with no food in it, or there there may
7 be postdischarge needs, such as necessities for a
8 new baby, prescriptions, or transportation. When
9 we see a need, we try to meet it if we can, and we
10 did to the amount of \$52 million in 2014,
11 including over \$31 million in uncompensated care.

12 Additionally, we align with key community
13 partners whose missions are compatible with ours.
14 These organizations recognize the humanity in
15 every person and share our respect for life. We
16 are honored to work with them to serve our
17 community.

18 St. James is aided in the fulfillment of
19 its mission by the unwavering commitment of its
20 doctors, nurses, and staff. Oftentimes, in
21 addition to personal donations of money, food, and
22 various items and gifts, many participate in
23 countless events that bring health care through
24 free screenings and education out to the

1 communities that we serve.

2 As you have heard, or will hear from
3 others, St. James' proposed restructuring plan and
4 the hospital changes that will take place have no
5 impact on our mission to serve the Southland. We
6 are, and will remain, committed to carrying out
7 our mission here, just as we have for more than a
8 century.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: James Siegert, Craig
11 Miller, and LaNiece Thomas-Flagg, please step up.

12 DR. SIEGERT: Good afternoon. My name is
13 James Siegert, S-I-E-G-E-R-T, and I am a urologist
14 employed with Specialty Physicians of Illinois
15 with offices in Olympia Fields.

16 I was born, raised, educated in
17 Chicago Heights, having attended St. Agnes for
18 elementary school, Marian Catholic for high
19 school. I then went away to college, but
20 completed my clinical rotation during medical
21 school at St. James. When it came time to
22 complete a residency, I completed a five-year
23 urological surgery residency at St. James, in the
24 hospital at both campuses, as well as the

1 outpatient clinics.

2 So having grown up in the area, having
3 family in the area, having cared for patients in
4 the area, having been a patient in the area, I
5 think I am uniquely qualified to comment on the
6 restructuring, but my preference at this point,
7 and moving forward, is to continue to admit
8 patients to the Olympia Fields campus, for a
9 multitude of reasons, but, perhaps, most strongly
10 is the overall experience, both as a patient, as
11 well as a clinician, in that it's much better than
12 clinically is available at Chicago Heights, and
13 that's not to take anything away from
14 Chicago Heights, the nurses, the physicians.

15 However, they are somewhat limited by the
16 red brick four walls on the outside, and that the
17 structural confines of the building were built
18 long before things that we previously considered
19 amenities, such as private rooms, minimally
20 invasive surgery, as well as quiet places for
21 healing became, more or less, the standard of care
22 in the 21st Century.

23 Further, St. James' need to continue to
24 improve accessibility by attracting talented

1 physicians in providing services that otherwise
2 would not be available in our community, this is
3 an important consideration I think is often lost
4 when this plan is being proposed.

5 So the ability for me to practice at a
6 modern hospital that's already on the cutting edge
7 of such specialties as cardiovascular care, is a
8 major selling point when deciding where to
9 practice. Patients, families, and clinicians are
10 lucky to have access to such a hospital in our
11 community.

12 So I throw my support largely in favor of
13 the restructuring process.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. THOMAS-FLAGG: My name is LaNiece
16 Thomas-Flagg. F-L-A-G-G. When I think about the
17 plan, I just am excited about it, and I think it
18 is very beneficial to the community. As a
19 resident of Matteson, I work in Chicago Heights, I
20 grew up in Park Forest.

21 On an emotional side, it is pretty sad to
22 see the deprivation of the community. A lot of
23 the things that we were fighting for in life when
24 I was younger, are now abandoned and empty, and it

1 does something to your life, it does something to
2 your spirit.

3 I want to make sure that everyone -- that
4 I go on record in support of the plan to continue
5 to use both of the facilities. I am impressed
6 with the idea of expanding the urgent care
7 services, to bring new physicians into our
8 community, and also the programs that were
9 developed by St. James to combat obesity. A lot
10 of hospitals are more into taking care of
11 patients, but this whole plan is even including
12 preventive care, which is necessary for our
13 communities. All we have to do is take care of --
14 better care of ourselves and to see that this
15 plan, including that, is very complimentary of the
16 wonderful care that the Sisters have done for so
17 many years.

18 Health care is changing, and I believe
19 that we need to stand behind the St. James plan.
20 We have placed our trust in the Sisters for
21 generations and we have to continue to do so.
22 There's no reason to believe that they don't have
23 our best interest in mind now.

24 So as we face the difficult decisions

1 that are to come, I hope that we all keep in mind
2 the great job that they have done in the past and
3 understand that they will do a wonderful job in
4 the future. Thank you.

5 MR. MILLER: Good evening. My name is Craig
6 Miller, M-I-L-L-E-R, and I am the Executive
7 Director of Specialty Physicians of Illinois, LLC.

8 The plan that St. James has put before
9 this Board reflect the changing health care
10 delivery system that physicians are using in their
11 practices. Except in grave situations, the best
12 place to recover is in the home, and physicians
13 strive to keep patients out of the hospital and in
14 their familiar environment.

15 Having a modern, updated facility like
16 Olympia Fields, with all services under one roof,
17 allows for better care. Expanding the primary
18 care facility at Chicago Heights will give our
19 physicians additional tools with which to provide
20 care and treat patients in the appropriate
21 setting.

22 At the end of the day, the proposal
23 before the Board will help us attract
24 well-qualified physicians who want to practice at

1 the most modern facilities.

2 We work every day to engage the best
3 physicians so we can continue to provide the level
4 of care everyone should expect. This community
5 deserves nothing less.

6 I encourage the Board to approve this
7 plan and help us to continue to provide access to
8 care for all citizens of the Southland.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Can I have Brenda
11 Bush-Moline, Janice Coffey, and David Maine.

12 MS. BUSH-MOLINE: Good evening. My name is
13 Brenda Bush-Moline. B-U-S-H M-O-L-I-N-E. I am a
14 principal with VOA Associates, Incorporated. We
15 are a health care planning and design firm.

16 Health care has evolved. With this new
17 reality, there is need for recalibration of
18 capital and resources to ensure that health care
19 remains viable and quality based. This new
20 paradigm supports health care delivery within
21 community-based settings. There's less focus on
22 the need for traditional hospital-based care, as
23 we consider these community settings.

24 Restructuring of the Franciscan St. James

1 Health project consolidates acute care services,
2 reduces redundancy, improves operations, and
3 extends care into the community for prevention and
4 maintenance.

5 After significant and in-depth review of
6 existing facilities, it is clear the
7 Chicago Heights campus, built in the early 1900s,
8 has been extended well beyond its useful life.

9 The health care delivery system has also
10 changed. Volumes have declined, space available,
11 and square footage used are simply out of sync.
12 Occupancy costs, upkeep, heating, cooling, and
13 maintenance exacerbate these issues. Use patterns
14 and physical plant are no longer aligned.

15 Significant investments in retrofits to
16 the Chicago Heights campus would produce
17 substandard results that do not represent industry
18 best practices. A commitment to community-based
19 immediate care and physician practices offers
20 opportunities to interact with providers outside
21 the acute care setting.

22 Community health issues will continue to
23 be addressed with more robust services, such as
24 diabetes, obesity, and lifestyle education.

1 Association with primary care providers and
2 specialists can be strengthened.

3 We are encouraged by the mission-based
4 dedication of Franciscan St. James Health in
5 achieving this restructuring plan allowing
6 continued viability to actively serve this
7 community.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. COFFEY: Good evening, everyone. I thank
10 you for the opportunity to speak tonight. My name
11 is Janice Coffey. C-O-F-F-E-Y. I have lived in
12 the Chicago Heights since 1960.

13 St. James is my hospital. I love this
14 community and I love St. James. Clearly, there
15 has been a lot of changes to the community over
16 the years, but everyone knew that the Sisters
17 would be here as long as that was financially
18 feasible.

19 It seems that the proposed plan is the
20 only way that the Sisters can remain in a
21 community that we all know they love. So many
22 businesses have just left, leaving us with
23 nothing. I see the Sisters trying to do
24 everything in their power to actually fulfill

1 their original mission of delivering health care
2 to our community, offering state-of-the-art health
3 care, as well as offering employment opportunities
4 from within our community.

5 I was talking with some friends over the
6 weekend, and we all wondered how another business
7 would be treated if they said they were willing to
8 come to the area and invest \$137 million. I can't
9 remember anyone wanting to do that in our
10 community. I can't imagine they would be
11 receiving the treatment that the Sisters have
12 gotten.

13 I understand nobody likes change, but I
14 also know this plan gives us the best chance for
15 Chicago Heights to remain open. As a resident of
16 the Southland, I am glad they are investing so
17 much money to expand Olympia Fields so that we
18 will have brighter rooms and a state-of-the-art
19 hospital that we can all be proud of. We deserve
20 that.

21 I am also encouraged to hear that I can
22 still go to the Chicago Heights campus for my
23 outpatient services. It may not be the campus we
24 have all come to know. However, it is better than

1 them completely leaving Chicago Heights, and I am
2 grateful they are finding a way to stay here. We
3 are better off to have something on the
4 Chicago Heights campus than nothing.

5 Because of that, I am obviously very much
6 in support of the Sisters and their plan to stay
7 in the Southland.

8 Thank you.

9 MR. MAINE: Hello. My name is David Maine,
10 like the state. I am a member of Labor Union
11 Local 5, which is here in Chicago Heights. I am
12 going to put my glasses on.

13 I think it's a good project and I am glad
14 that Franciscan St. James wants to use union
15 workers on this project. It's important to me,
16 and my family, and building trades to continue in
17 this area. Things have not been so good. So we
18 are really happy about that.

19 Our industry has been hit hard by the
20 uncertain political climate and jobs have been
21 lost, and we need this project in the Southland
22 area to continue to have jobs here. It will bring
23 many, many jobs here.

24 Many of us live in Southland. We depend

1 on having a strong hospital system to help our
2 families. Union members use hospitals and clinics
3 all the time, so we support this project.

4 With the union labor on this job, the
5 Franciscan Alliance plans to expand and modernize
6 St. James in Olympia Fields and expand the
7 Chicago Heights Urgent Care Center, which is
8 across the street from my house.

9 With this Board's approval, we will have
10 a modern health care system for residents in
11 Southland, and our families for many years to
12 come, and we will have good union jobs that pay,
13 and have insurance and pension, and that's what we
14 need in the Southland more and more of.

15 Thank you.

16 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Dr. Suj Sundararaj,
17 step up, Beverly Sokol, and Jairo Cruz.

18 DR. SUNDARARAJ: Good evening. My name is Suj
19 Sundararaj, spelled S-U-N-D-A-R-A-R-A-J. I am a
20 board-certified internal medicine physician and
21 hospitalist with Franciscan St. James Hospital.

22 The proposed consolidation of inpatient
23 services ensures that Franciscan St. James has the
24 appropriate number of beds to serve our Southland

1 communities. Between both campuses, there are 470
2 beds, but on average, only 130 of them are
3 occupied daily. What St. James proposes
4 demonstrates the hospital's commitment and
5 business need to be organized in ways that truly
6 foster service to our patients in the most
7 effective way, and that it ensures that resources
8 are properly and effectively deployed at one site.
9 I believe these recommendations by St. James are
10 justified and based on solid planning focused on
11 the health needs of patients. They will result in
12 improved access to care and enhance the hospital's
13 ability to serve patients.

14 I ask that the Health Facilities Board
15 approves this plan.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. SOKOL: My name is Beverly Sokol.
18 S-O-K-O-L. I have lived in Olympia Fields with my
19 husband, Edwin, for 53 years. I've been a
20 positive community activist for 31 of those years.

21 We are here today to advocate for the
22 proposed \$137 million in St. James Hospital
23 Olympia Fields and the planned renovations at the
24 Chicago Heights campus.

1 After being in the Northwestern Hospital
2 system for 30 years, my husband and I have
3 switched to St. James Olympia Fields. Between
4 September and October, my husband was taken twice
5 to the Olympia Fields emergency room and he stayed
6 in the hospital facility a total of seven days for
7 treatment of his pneumonia. In August, I had a
8 transcatheter aortic valve replacement at
9 Northwestern. I am still here. In a post-surgery
10 visit, the surgeon suggested that we consider
11 finding a local cardiologist in a hospital that
12 uses the Epic System My Chart Program so that the
13 local doctors and the local cardiologist could
14 communicate with our Northwestern team. St. James
15 Hospital was the only south suburban hospital that
16 uses My Chart.

17 Online investigations reveal that
18 St. James Heart and Vascular Institute was in the
19 top 10 percent in the country, and with the
20 recommendation of friends and neighbors, we have
21 happily become patients of one of the
22 cardiologists and two internists of the Specialty
23 Physicians Network in St. James Olympia Fields,
24 plus a pulmonologist who is on the staff.

1 St. James Health Care prescribed
2 incredible after-care service for Mr. Sokol at our
3 home. My Northwestern surgeon prescribed cardiac
4 rehab, which I did for three months at St. James
5 Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation at the Heart and
6 Vascular Institute in Olympia Fields. This
7 program is the highest rated in the Southland.

8 It is important that the Olympia Fields
9 campus be enhanced to service an aging population
10 and younger families who desire to send their
11 children to our blue ribbon elementary school and
12 our international baccalaureate high school.

13 Mr. Sokol and I are living proof that
14 excellent medical care can be local. Your
15 investment in Southland will give us the
16 successful economic sustainability needed for the
17 next 50 years as it draws investors to come to our
18 program for the quality of its medical
19 institutions and other amenities that will follow.

20 We thank the Franciscan Alliance for
21 providing the opportunity to present our thoughts,
22 and especially for believing that we are worthy of
23 your support.

24 Thank you very much.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Is Jairo Cruz here?

2 Thank you.

3 DR. CRUZ: Hi. My name is Jairo Cruz,
4 C-R-U-Z, and I am a board-certified cardiologist.
5 I work at the Specialty Physicians of Illinois and
6 St. James Hospital for the last 35 years. I am
7 also a member of the Franciscan Board of
8 Directors.

9 The plan that St. James is proposing is
10 an appropriate response to the issues of a
11 changing health care environment that we are
12 facing today. The Chicago Heights hospital is
13 outdated. The staff does the best it can, but its
14 useful life has passed. Neither one of the
15 hospitals is operating at a high enough occupancy
16 level to provide any efficiencies of scale.
17 Rather, we have two surgical suites, two imaging
18 departments, two ICUs, two ERs, two kitchens, lots
19 of empty beds, and the list goes on.

20 The ERs, particularly the Chicago Heights
21 ER, are being used for non-emergency care, with
22 patients going to the ER when they should be going
23 to an urgent care center, or private physicians,
24 or primary care clinics.

1 St. James plans to consolidate inpatient
2 and ER services, to expand the capacity of its
3 Chicago Heights Urgent Care Center right down the
4 road from the hospital, to expand the primary care
5 center, and to recruit additional primary care
6 physicians is exactly what is needed at Southland.

7 I would urge the Certificate of Need
8 Board to approve the plans, and to do so without
9 delay.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: We have Ernest
11 Gibson, Carolyn Gibson, and Christine Murphy,
12 please come to the front. Thank you.

13 MR. GIBSON: God evening. To the state
14 representatives and to our community, I am Ernest
15 Gibson. G-I-B-S-O-N.

16 I have been a resident of the Village of
17 Olympia Fields for the last 20 years. I am also
18 President of the Wysteria Homeowners Association.
19 We have 71 homes that make up the Wysteria
20 Homeowners Association. So on behalf of the
21 residents of the Wysteria Homeowners Association,
22 we are very grateful for the Franciscan St. James
23 Health reorganization, that will certainly enable
24 long-term health care not for Chicago Heights or

1 Olympia Fields, but for the Southland. We are
2 most appreciative and we stand in support of you
3 in its entirety.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. GIBSON: Good afternoon. My name is
6 Carolyn Gibson, and I am a Trustee for the
7 Village of Olympia Fields. Thank you for this
8 opportunity to speak today.

9 I am very concerned about the confusion
10 that is occurring relative to the decisions and
11 plans presented by the Franciscan Sisters to
12 enhance the health care delivery to residents of
13 the Southland.

14 We all must realize that they are
15 continuing to provide the funds in order to make
16 all of our lives better. I have lived in the
17 Southland for 20 years, and I do recognize and
18 commend the mission of the Sisters of -- the
19 Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration for
20 their many years of investing in the health care
21 of Southland communities.

22 The expansion of their services by
23 purchasing the old Osteopathic Hospital, which is
24 now St. James Olympia Fields, is proof positive of

1 their desire to enhance the health care for all.
2 The Sisters, the Board, and the executive
3 St. James staff members, have been delivering
4 compassionate health care to the Southland
5 residents for over 100 years.

6 In my opinion, maintaining two hospitals
7 which are so close in proximity is not
8 economically feasible. Consolidating and
9 expanding vital areas will improve patients'
10 experiences, while not giving special priority to
11 any one village, city, town, or municipality.

12 Instead of fighting the plan being
13 proposed by St. James, we all should be committing
14 ourselves to working with St. James on the
15 redevelopment of the Olympia Fields and
16 Chicago Heights campuses. We should welcome the
17 plan of recruiting more physicians to our
18 community.

19 St. James is making the right decision,
20 and personally I applaud that effort to improve
21 health care for all of the Southland residents.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. MURPHY: Good evening. My name is
24 Christine Murphy. M-U-R-P-H-Y. I am the

1 Vice-President of Nursing at St. James.

2 I am fairly new to the Franciscan family,
3 joining the organization in July of 2015. What
4 has impressed me most is the commitment of the
5 Sisters and each employee to support the mission
6 of continuing Christ's ministry in our Franciscan
7 tradition. I believe St. James' proposed
8 consolidation plan is the key to carrying out that
9 mission in the decades to come.

10 There are many advantages to
11 consolidating Franciscan St. James' acute care
12 services at one campus. It enables St. James to
13 offer enhanced ambulatory and primary care
14 services, supporting patients and their families
15 on their journey to wellness. Inpatients will
16 have the comfort and infection-control safety of
17 all private rooms in a more modern facility in
18 Olympia Fields. Consolidating to a single
19 facility will improve quality of care and enhance
20 nursing skills and efficiencies. Accessibility
21 and availability by attracting specialists and
22 providing services that otherwise would not be
23 available to our community. It allows us to
24 further develop our centers of excellence by

1 implementing advancements in technology and
2 practice at one location.

3 These reasons and more support the need
4 for approval of St. James' proposed project.

5 Thank you.

6 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Next up we are going
7 to have James Valleyfield, Willett Hudson, and
8 Adam Nickerson. Again, that's James Valleyfield,
9 Willette Hudson, and Adam Nickerson.

10 MS. HUDSON: Good evening, everyone. My name
11 is Willette, W-I-L-L-E-T-T-E, Hudson, H-U-D-S-O-N.

12 I am an Elder and the Mother of The
13 Emmaus Community, which is a non-denomination
14 church of Chicago Heights, as well as a Trustee of
15 the Village of Olympia Fields.

16 I have lived in Southland for
17 approximately 32 years, and during those years I
18 recognize that the Sisters have definitely done a
19 favor for me personally and for the Southland. I
20 had my dad, and my husband, and a brother have all
21 had the opportunity to be served by the
22 Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields.

23 Recently, the brother was in the
24 Olympia Fields, and I want to say the difference

1 in the rooms alone made him comfortable, because
2 when he arrived there, his condition was a
3 death-threatening infectious disease, and they
4 gave him really good service. So I am really
5 proud of the fact that they have improved that
6 area very much, because his wife had the
7 opportunity to stay in the room as well.

8 So I think it is time for us to start
9 working together to help St. James, to continue to
10 provide the best health care for the Southland.

11 At this point the business community, our
12 elected officials, and our residents need to work
13 with St. James and redevelop -- on redeveloping
14 the Chicago Heights campus by recruiting more
15 physicians to our community and providing
16 alternative service for our emergencies.

17 After a detailed review, St. James has
18 already started this process, according to plans
19 that they done as a result of those reviews. So
20 that today we are at the point that it is time for
21 us to help, instead of hinder progress, so we can
22 have the best for our entire region. That's why
23 they have gathered our input, this is the fourth
24 meeting that I've attended, which was very

1 important to us.

2 Members from my church had some concerns,
3 of course, and we are going to make sure that they
4 are provided transportation, because that was
5 their only concern. We will give them
6 transportation to whatever area, but I am hoping
7 it will be Olympia Fields, because I do approve of
8 that move.

9 I am sure St. James will continue to work
10 with us to give us the best service and try to
11 provide the answers to all of our concerns.
12 However, it is sometimes difficult to accept
13 change, but it's usually beneficial for us to let
14 the persons in the business decide when change is
15 needed. As we review any business, as well as
16 health care, the delivery of that problem and care
17 is much different than it was 40 years ago.

18 Thank you for the opportunity.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Can we have Michael
20 Settecase come forward? Thank you.

21 MR. NICKERSON: Hello. Thank you for the
22 opportunity to address the Board. My name is Adam
23 Nickerson. I am the Club Manager at
24 Olympia Fields Country Club, and also a resident

1 in the Graymoor subdivision of Olympia Fields.

2 It's not hard to understand why
3 St. Francis -- St. James in Chicago Heights needs
4 to close. It's 100 years old, and bricks are
5 literally falling off the walls. No matter how
6 much money you sink into the building, it's still
7 going to be an old building. The clubhouse at the
8 country club is approaching the century mark, so I
9 know from firsthand experience what it takes to
10 maintain aging facilities.

11 Olympia Fields hospital is just a
12 10-minute car ride away from Chicago Heights,
13 probably only six or seven by ambulance. I
14 guarantee you that there are thousands of people
15 around the Chicagoland area that live more than 10
16 minutes from their closest hospital.

17 St. James is making the right decision,
18 in my opinion, in re-focusing their efforts on
19 improving access to the outpatient services in the
20 Chicago Heights area, and I commend them for their
21 plans, and I encourage us all to support what they
22 are doing.

23 The consolidation of all of the services
24 at Olympia Fields makes a lot of sense to me. The

1 continuous sinking of millions of dollars into an
2 old facility does not. Perhaps my petition would
3 be different if the closest hospital was a
4 half hour away, but that's just not the case.

5 Thank you.

6 DR. SETTECASE: My name is Dr. Michael
7 Settecase. S-E-T-T-E-C-A-S-E. I am a
8 board-certified family practice doctor and I've
9 been practicing in this area for 35 years. I
10 started in Olympia Fields before the building was
11 finished. We were one of the first student groups
12 to make rounds there. I have been dedicated to
13 the Olympia Fields campus, as well as the
14 St. James campus in Chicago Heights, for most of
15 my career.

16 There's been many turnovers in how
17 hospitals were handled and how they function.
18 We've been told over and over and over that the
19 possibility of losing St. James, all of it, is
20 very real. The possibility of not being able to
21 keep us alive, all of us in this room, all of the
22 people in the Southland, and cared for, is also
23 very real. There's been a lot of transitions in
24 medical care over the years.

1 As the Medical Director of the hospital
2 for 23 years, and I work with the residency
3 program with some wonderful people, which brings
4 me to my main point, it's not the buildings that
5 supply the care, it's the people. Expanding
6 outpatient care is the bases of all care going
7 into the future. Very few of us will end up in
8 the hospital, but almost all of us will end up in
9 the urgent care, or in a doctor's office, or
10 having to call for a care coordinator or having
11 someone try to help you pay your bills, or fill
12 your pantry, as some of the Sisters have done.

13 Over the past few years there's been an
14 aggressive campaign as part of this institution,
15 all of the institution, to supply better services.
16 St. James has one of the top family medicine
17 residency programs in the state, if not in the
18 country. We are recruiting aggressively to try
19 and get more primary care physicians than the ones
20 who are out there taking care of you most of the
21 time. We've hired four of those physicians out of
22 our graduating residency class. We have supplied
23 more new people out of this area than anyone else
24 in the area.

1 As many people try to oppose this plan,
2 our care of patients in the Southland has been
3 exemplary. Even the people who oppose the plan
4 will agree with that. St. James is here for the
5 long-term.

6 The school that started the hospital in
7 Olympia Fields started in 1900. The Sisters have
8 been involved in this area for 140 years.

9 So I strongly urge the Board to approve
10 this proposal and allow us to continue caring for
11 the patients for the next 200 years.

12 Thank you.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I appreciate
14 everyone's patience. Thank you very much.

15 We are at the point of intermission. Our
16 gracious court reporters have been working very
17 hard, I thank you very much, I know they need a
18 rest. So we are going to take an intermission
19 now. So we anticipate starting back up at
20 6:30 p.m.

21 If you have not signed in yet, the
22 sign-in table is outside. You will need to sign a
23 pink sheet if you want to speak and a white sheet
24 if you just want to register your attendance.

1 Thank you again.

2 (A recess was had.)

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Once again, my name
4 is Juan Morado, Jr. I am the General Counsel and
5 the Hearing Officer for today from the Illinois
6 Health Facilities and Services Review Board.

7 If you haven't had an opportunity to sign
8 in, please do so outside at the table. If you
9 wish to speak this evening, you have to sign a
10 pink sheet of paper, and you can indicate whether
11 you are in support or opposing the project. If
12 you just want to register your attendance and not
13 speak tonight, we are asking you to please fill
14 out the white sheet of paper. Both are located
15 outside at the desk. You can see George, who is
16 back there taking the forms.

17 Again, we are going to go ahead and call
18 three folks up at a time. I am going to ask that
19 Reverend Ron Kondziolka, R.E. Waite, and David
20 Mekarski, please step up.

21 If you have any written comments that you
22 would like to turn in for the record, you can go
23 ahead and place those on this back stage.

24 Thank you.

1 One other thing. Speakers, if you can
2 please remember to state your name when you begin,
3 and spell both your first and last name.

4 Thank you.

5 FATHER KONDZIOLKA: Good evening. I am
6 Father Ron Kondziolka. K-O-N-D-Z-I-O-L-K-A.

7 I am the Director of Spiritual Care
8 Services at Franciscan St. James Health, and I
9 want to express my unwavering support for the
10 Franciscan St. James Hospital plan to consolidate
11 inpatient and emergency services at Olympia Fields
12 Hospital.

13 St. James and the Sisters' mission has
14 been a beacon of hope for the people here in the
15 Southland who come to us for their care, and we
16 care for them in mind, body, and spirit. We have
17 done this now for more than 104 years.

18 I am encouraged that my Archbishop, and
19 yours, Archbishop Blase Cupich of the Archdiocese
20 of Chicago, has already affirmed support of the
21 St. James Hospital plan, stating that the
22 Archdiocese understands the Sisters of St. Francis
23 Perpetual Adoration's unwavering commitment to the
24 region, the fact that alternatives to the

1 hospital's closing have already been thoroughly
2 evaluated, and the financial reality is that in
3 this day and age you cannot operate two hospitals
4 so close together.

5 I urge your consideration for this
6 project proposal and your informed decision to
7 approve it.

8 I thank you for this opportunity to share
9 these few words.

10 MR. WAITE: Good evening. There's a lot of
11 misinformation going around about, you know,
12 what's going to happen, what's the -- you know,
13 what do the Sisters have planned for the community
14 and so forth, and they are not going to close
15 Chicago Heights, they are going to make it more
16 efficient. The footprint for the St. James
17 organization is going to be significantly larger,
18 and something like 20 million of the 137 million
19 is going to be spent on Chicago Heights'
20 properties.

21 I mean, that is a boom for the entire
22 southern region of Chicago. This is an absolute
23 drop-out-of-the-sky boom that God gave us through
24 the Sisters. I don't want to do anything that

1 would make the Sisters unhappy. I mean, they've
2 been doing this kind of thing for years. Some of
3 the most major of all hospitals in the world have
4 been as a result of the Sisters.

5 Cleveland Clinic, for example, was
6 originally founded by the Sisters. The Children's
7 Hospital in Memphis, sometimes referred to as the
8 Danny Thomas Hospital, that was founded and put
9 together by the Sisters. When the Sisters feel
10 like their job is complete, they go someplace else
11 and try to duplicate that.

12 The Sisters have never, ever, turned away
13 anybody that was poor and couldn't pay their bill.
14 I mean, when you've got some 80,000 people coming
15 into an emergency room a year, you can't -- you
16 know, 85 percent of those --

17 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
18 comments.

19 MR. WAITE: What?

20 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
21 comments.

22 MR. WAITE: Oh, thanks.

23 Listen, my friends, I've been in this
24 neighborhood, I think I said my name is Robert

1 Waite, I'm a Trustee for Olympia Fields, and I've
2 lived in this area for over 30 years, and I will
3 tell you, this thing is a boom to the whole
4 southern region. It is the equivalent --

5 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you, Mr. Waite.

6 MR. WAITE: -- of having 15 Super Wal-Mart
7 stores built in this area. We need it because
8 it's going to create a jillion jobs.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I am going to remind
11 the speakers as they come up to please limit
12 yourselves to two minutes, because of the number
13 of speakers we have and the limited amount of time
14 that we have in this space, I'm going to need to
15 be a little more -- I'm going to have to cut folks
16 off. I hope that you understand. Thank you.

17 MR. MEKARSKI: Hi. I am David A. Mekarski,
18 Village Administrator for the Village of
19 Olympia Fields. That's M-E-K-A-R-S-K-I.

20 On behalf of the Olympia Fields Village
21 President, Debbie Meyers-Martin, and the Board of
22 Trustees, I would like to offer our wholehearted
23 support for the Franciscan St. James restructuring
24 plan. The plan has been well thought out and it

1 is in the best interest of our entire Southland
2 region.

3 Due to the generosity of the Franciscan
4 Sisters and their confidence in the Chicago
5 Southland, we have the opportunity to take two
6 hospitals and transform them into an exceptional
7 level of health care that this region has not seen
8 before. We would not look at this opportunity --
9 we should not look at this opportunity as what
10 should be in the best interest of Olympia Fields
11 or Chicago Heights, rather what is in the best
12 interest of both our communities and the region at
13 large.

14 The \$137 million investment represents
15 one of the largest economic investments to the
16 Chicago Southland in decades. The plan features
17 expanded emergency room capacity, new inpatient
18 rehabilitation, obstetrics, introducing new
19 hospice care, and will provide modern, all
20 private, patient rooms for upgraded hospital stay.

21 Let me point out that in Chicago Heights,
22 Franciscan St. James is improving their outpatient
23 services in primary care, doubling the size of the
24 Urgent Care Facility staffed by physicians 24/7.

1 For the last 18 months, Mr. Kimmel, CEO
2 of Franciscan St. James, has been working with our
3 my office, as administrator, and our economic
4 development community in educating our team on the
5 proposed consolidation and restructuring, as well
6 as soliciting feedback suggestions to improve and
7 enhance the overall plan.

8 At a recent regional meeting of our
9 public safety officials, Mr. Kimmel has pledged to
10 meet with every fire, EMS, and police department
11 throughout our region, to refine and improve this
12 plan, through critique and recommendations of our
13 community's public safety professionals.

14 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
15 comments.

16 MR. MEKARSKI: Our village president and her
17 administrative team are confident that the issues
18 raised by the critics of this plan can be both
19 mitigated and resolved collectively through the
20 determination and creativity which is fostered
21 when we work together for the good of our region.

22 For Olympia Fields, we would like to say
23 that we are not an island unto ourselves, but we
24 are only as strong as the strength of our

1 neighbors and our community at large.

2 Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

4 Next up we have Daniel Netluch, Ashley
5 Tomei, and Maureen Kelly.

6 DR. NETLUCH: Good evening, everyone. My name
7 is Daniel Netluch. N-E-T-L-U-C-H. I am an
8 emergency physician and currently Chief Medical
9 Officer and Vice-President of Medical Affairs at
10 Franciscan St. James Health.

11 I would like to just take a moment to
12 discuss an aspect of St. James' plan that is being
13 overlooked. The consolidation of inpatient
14 services into one hospital, that is designed for
15 the way medicine is practiced today, will be an
16 invaluable asset to our physician recruitment
17 effort and continue to focus on providing quality
18 care.

19 Like everyone else, physicians are
20 constantly being forced to become more efficient.
21 St. James' two hospitals operate with a single
22 medical staff. The concept has served the
23 hospital well, but having to travel back and forth
24 between two campuses multiple times a day and

1 cover an office practice, has become terribly
2 inefficient. Young physicians are looking for a
3 single, modern hospital to practice in. Our
4 recruitment efforts are being stymied by the
5 responsibility of physicians to cover both
6 campuses at any one given time.

7 Our plans include remodeling of the
8 Medical Office Building at the Chicago Heights
9 campus. That will have two positive outcomes on
10 the Chicago Heights community.

11 First, access to the physicians
12 practicing at Chicago Heights will not be reduced.
13 Area residents will be able to continue to use
14 their physicians.

15 Second, the renovated Medical Office
16 Building gives us the opportunity to office more
17 physicians in the Chicago Heights community,
18 particularly those coming out of the Family
19 Medicine residency training program.

20 Thank you for the opportunity to provide
21 these comments. I hope that you will convey to
22 the other Members of the Board how important this
23 project is to our physician recruitment effort and
24 our abilities to continue providing excellent

1 patient care.

2 Thank you.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

4 MS. TOMEI: Hello. My name is Ashley Tomei,
5 A-S-H-L-E-Y T-O-M-E-I, and I work for Human
6 Resources at Franciscan St. James Health.

7 I was born at St. James in
8 Chicago Heights and have always loved St. James,
9 but I completely understand why these proposed
10 plans are necessary. The same holds true for most
11 of the people that I work with. Our staff is
12 looking forward to working in an environment
13 designed to deliver services in a contemporary
14 fashion. In the long run, that will improve
15 patient care, and that is what it's all about.

16 I look forward to the approval of this
17 plan.

18 Thank you.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

20 MS. KELLY: My name is Maureen Kelly.
21 K-E-L-L-Y. I am a registered nurse and I've been
22 a nurse at St. James Chicago Heights for 23 years.

23 While part of me does feel sad about the
24 closing of the hospital, I am looking forward to

1 having our patients at the Olympia Fields campus.
2 The patients that I have been treating, some of
3 whom I've come to know by their first names, can
4 anticipate seeing the same familiar faces when
5 they are admitted to the Olympia Fields hospital
6 that they've been seeing now at St. James
7 Chicago Heights.

8 I've seen the patient unit at
9 Olympia Fields, they are beautiful, and I believe
10 that my patients will appreciate the modern feel
11 of those rooms, they are going to appreciate the
12 private room configuration, and they will
13 appreciate the size of the rooms, much bigger than
14 Chicago Heights.

15 From a staff perspective, I am going to
16 welcome the spaciousness, the enhanced privacy,
17 and the modern amenities.

18 I realize that change is difficult,
19 particularly when families have been going to the
20 same hospital for generations. But the time has
21 come, and we will be there to treat the same
22 patients we are treating now, and most of my
23 co-workers have told me that they plan on moving
24 to the Olympia Fields campus.

1 I ask that the Health Facilities and
2 Review Board approve St. James' plan so that the
3 needed transition can begin and we can continue to
4 serve the Southland.

5 Thank you.

6 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

7 Deborah Bergonia, Lee Langon, and Tonja
8 Austin.

9 MS. BERGONIA: My name is Debra Bergonia.
10 D-E-B-R-A B-E-R-G-O-N-I-A. I am the Director of
11 Revenue Management for Franciscan St. James
12 Health.

13 St. James wants to continue excellence in
14 health care for our communities. Over the years,
15 St. James has made efforts to consolidate existing
16 resources and reduce redundancies, all while
17 expanding the range of services, improving access,
18 and elevating the quality of health care in the
19 Southland.

20 St. James has been successful in their
21 efforts thus far, but the reality is that the
22 Chicago Heights hospital is hammered by the aged
23 and physical constraints of the existing facility.

24 The decision to consolidate the two

1 inpatient campuses to a single facility is based
2 on solid planning focused on the health care of
3 patients and will result in improved access to
4 care. It is the right thing to do.

5 I encourage the Health Facilities Board
6 to approve the solid plan for the future of
7 Franciscan St. James Health.

8 Thank you.

9 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

10 MR. LANGON: Good evening, everyone. My name
11 is Lee Langon. L-A-N-G-O-N. I am a community
12 activist and the President of -- I am the Chairman
13 of the Presidents Association of Olympia Fields,
14 which is 15 homeowners associations and 1800
15 residents in the Village of Olympia Fields.

16 Health care has changed dramatically in
17 the last 100 years. Just as our world has
18 changed, it's not hard to understand why
19 Franciscan St. James Hospital needs to change with
20 the times. The Chicago Heights facility is 100
21 years old and it is a functional obsolescent
22 building.

23 We understand the proposed business plan
24 is to repurpose this building and continue to

1 serve the residents of Chicago Heights and the
2 surrounding community. So, they are not
3 abandoning Chicago Heights.

4 Franciscan's goal is to bring
5 state-of-the-art health care to the Southland,
6 which is sorely needed. The Olympia Fields
7 facility will be easier to expand and consolidate
8 services, and is still 10 minutes by car from the
9 old Olympia Fields facility.

10 We applaud and support this bold
11 initiative by the Franciscan organization. We
12 applaud the Sisters for all of their efforts for
13 over 100 years.

14 This initiative of the Franciscan
15 organization will truly bring health care to the
16 21st Century to the Southland with new
17 opportunities it will present to all of our
18 communities, and we look forward to working with
19 St. James to expand community health care,
20 education, and training in the Southland so we can
21 train our kids and keep our children here in the
22 Southland to perpetuate our community.

23 Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

24 DR. AUSTIN: Good evening. My name is Tonja,

1 T-O-N-J-A, Austin, A-U-S-T-I-N, and I am a
2 board-certified Family Medicine physician, a
3 Southland community resident, and current
4 President of the Medical Staff at Franciscan
5 St. James Health.

6 On behalf of the medical staff, it is
7 important that I assure you that the medical staff
8 is committed to continue partnering with
9 Franciscan St. James in its delivery of quality
10 health care that is uniquely outfitted for the
11 Southland community that we serve together. We
12 are especially appreciative of the investments
13 that St. James has already made to improve access
14 to primary care, but specialty care physicians
15 services as well in our underserved and
16 underinsured communities and the commitment to
17 continue in that ministry.

18 I would also like to provide some
19 personal testimony of my own in regards to my
20 experience as a patient at Franciscan St. James.

21 In 2003, I was rushed to the St. James
22 Hospital emergency room. Once there, I was
23 assessed to be in critical condition and required
24 emergency surgery. I can truly say that the care

1 that I received was not only exceptional, but
2 compassionate, and for that reason I have
3 continued to seek out all of my personal health
4 care needs within the Franciscan St. James Health
5 System.

6 So I have a unique perspective, in that I
7 can personally attest to St. James' continued
8 dedication to improving quality of health care
9 services to the community and also its ability to
10 deliver on that promise.

11 Part of that promise is our medical
12 staff. Our physicians are on staff at both
13 campuses in Chicago Heights and in Olympia Fields.
14 Hence, your relationship with your physician will
15 not change.

16 Additionally, St. James' plans to
17 renovate the Chicago Heights Medical Office
18 Building and expand primary care access are key to
19 keeping patients out of the emergency room and in
20 an appropriate care setting. This is better
21 health care in the Southland.

22 So I urge the Board to approve the plan
23 before you without delay.

24 Thank you for your time.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Carlos Geringer,
2 Charles Stevenson, and Monica Lewis, please step
3 up.

4 DR. GERINGER: Good evening. My name is
5 Charles Geringer. G-E-R-I-N-G-E-R. I am a
6 board-certified physician specializing in the care
7 of patients with arthritis with Specialty
8 Physicians of Illinois.

9 Physicians are, understandably, concerned
10 about what St. James is proposing for our
11 patients. The logistics of how two emergency
12 departments and inpatient facilities will be
13 blended into one can be daunting. However, in the
14 post-Affordable Care Act, or health care world,
15 the reality is that this proposed change is
16 necessary. Once these noted challenges are
17 overcome, and there are many, St. James will still
18 be able to offer a large community of patients
19 across the south suburbs with comprehensive health
20 care that is better coordinated and higher
21 quality, which is what is mandated by the
22 Affordable Care Act.

23 I believe St. James' consolidation plan
24 is designed to provide the most effective care and

1 the best experience for patients, and is the only
2 option for the hospital to continue the commitment
3 to serve this community.

4 I urge the Health Facilities Board to
5 approve this plan, and I thank you for your time.

6 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

7 MR. STEVENSON: Good evening. I am Charles
8 Stevenson, S-T-E-V-E-N-S-O-N, Director of
9 Facilities Management and Planning at Franciscan
10 St. James Health. I am a licensed architect with
11 over 28 years of facilities management, health
12 care design, and master planning. I am the person
13 with the frontline responsibility of making sure
14 that the electrical system, the plumbing system,
15 all the utility systems, and operations of the
16 building are in good order and working 24 hours a
17 day, 365 days a year.

18 The fact of the matter is that St. James
19 Chicago Heights is 104 years old. As you are
20 aware, it is difficult to bring both health care
21 buildings up to today's technology and health care
22 standards. Every utility system in the hospital
23 needs to be upgraded.

24 Many of you have seen the scaffolding

1 outside the building. I would like to address
2 that issue. We are spending 1.4 million in
3 masonry renovation to prevent further
4 deterioration of the exterior facade and the
5 possibility of masonry failures and injuries. We
6 certainly do not want bricks falling off and
7 causing injury or harm to our patients, visitors,
8 staff, or the residents of Chicago Heights. The
9 last three years, we have spent over \$12 million
10 in repairs tied to the age of this building.

11 This is money not being spent on direct
12 patient care. This is above and beyond a normal
13 operating budget. The operating budget of this
14 aged facility runs us approximately \$1.50 per
15 square foot more than other campus -- than our
16 other campus and other like facilities. That is
17 \$850 million per year more to operate this aged
18 facility than our facility in Olympia Fields.

19 We continue to invest dollars in our
20 Chicago Heights campus, but the reality is
21 St. James Chicago Heights is not up to the
22 contemporary standard, it is expensive to operate,
23 and will require substantial capital investment to
24 bring the hospital up to contemporary health care

1 design standards and to meet the current code
2 requirement. This capital investment and the
3 yearly operating cost of this state facility is
4 not sustainable in today's health care
5 environment.

6 I ask the Illinois Health Facilities
7 Planning Board to approve this plan and to be in
8 line of health care delivery to the Southland.

9 Thank you.

10 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Can I have Dr. Lisa
11 Wallace, Jerome Calloway, and, I apologize, Linda
12 summer.

13 MS. LEWIS: Hi. My name is Monica Lewis. No,
14 I am not a member of the community. I am an
15 outsider hearing concerns about the new hospital
16 that you guys are embarking on here in
17 Olympia Fields.

18 What I am about to talk about is time
19 management, because the things that I've heard, as
20 an outsider, and worked in health care for a very
21 long time, up to 2012, was based on that.

22 A patient at Northwestern, because I
23 heard a lot of individuals talk about Northwestern
24 today, I am going to quote something that I always

1 see when I go into the hospital, it states,
2 "Cardiac arrest won't wait for the next stop."
3 That means with time management, with time
4 management, it won't wait.

5 I believe that the hospital should move
6 forward in restructuring, but I am concerned about
7 the response time with the fire departments and
8 the police departments, when they have to bring
9 the patients in through the ED. That's my
10 concern.

11 If you are going to eliminate yourself,
12 falling behind Northwestern, they are a trauma
13 center, they are a Trauma 1 center. Being a
14 patient and a former employee at Northwestern, I
15 am quite sure you guys want to follow behind those
16 steps and become a trauma center as well to be
17 certified. I know that you guys have emergency
18 medicine, because I just heard the physician that
19 just got up that's over the emergency medicine at
20 Olympia Fields. So I know you guys have it. You
21 just become certified and respond as a trauma
22 center. Because of the fact that a lot of
23 patients have to go to Christ for trauma services,
24 which that's on 95th Street, that's too far for a

1 patient from Chicago Heights or Olympia Fields to
2 go to Advocate Christ Hospital, which they are a
3 trauma center as well.

4 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
5 comments.

6 MS. LEWIS: I am done.

7 Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Dr. Lisa Wallace,
9 Jerome Calloway, and Linda Summer.

10 DR. CALLOWAY: Jerome Calloway. I am from
11 Crete, a retired physician, and have had
12 significant experience in ER work, and critical
13 care experience as well, as a pulmonary physician.

14 I believe it's good that the Sisters of
15 Franciscan Alliance are committed to support
16 health care in the Southland. Please thank them
17 for 104 years of caring.

18 The Olympia Fields expansion, updating
19 its facilities, will benefit us all. I can
20 understand the financial challenges may
21 necessitate closing the Chicago Heights hospital,
22 but in the apparent rush to complete the closure
23 process in a very short time, the affects on our
24 community has not been considered with significant

1 discussions with local governments. The times for
2 planning together has been further shortened by
3 the Alliance. No joint project plan has been
4 proposed in this area by the Alliance.

5 The Alliance services, an area generally
6 south of Olympia Fields, will be negatively
7 impacted. Not only will fire department,
8 ambulance services be compromised, but a
9 significant additional financial burden will be
10 placed on the affected villages for additional
11 personnel and vehicles.

12 Longer transport time will lead to a
13 chance at worse outcomes for those whose ambulance
14 run a further distance to Olympia Fields. One
15 five-to-three-minute extra transport time is very
16 significant to patients with heart attacks,
17 ruptured vessels, other life-threatening things.

18 The transportation problem can be
19 evaluated if the Alliance and the towns together
20 develop a project plan now that is then
21 incorporated into the final Alliance plan.

22 Efficiencies can be developed that have
23 minimized the time it takes to transport a patient
24 to the ER, with new electronic methods, really new

1 ones, perhaps integrated across the region, Region
2 7, there are further efficiencies available.

3 While the patient is on the way to the ER, the
4 EMTs can begin ER registration, obtain old
5 records, and arrange with the ER doctors what the
6 patient's super emergent needs might be.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
8 comments.

9 DR. CALLOWAY: I hope that you give the
10 affected towns and townships the time that they
11 need, and you need to work with them, please.

12 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Next up we are going
13 to have Mayor David Gonzalez, Mayor Ken Peterson.

14 MAYOR GONZALEZ: Good evening, everyone, and
15 thank you for coming.

16 I do agree that the building in
17 Chicago Heights, parts of it are over 100 years,
18 but it's been renovated so many times over that
19 it's very hard to find one piece that's only 100
20 years that's actually still there. It is a
21 building that's falling apart. But again, it's
22 because of the neglect that has happened over the
23 five, six years that have been moving all the
24 services over to Olympia Fields. So it's been a

1 neglected building of why the bricks are falling
2 apart.

3 We go back to 1999 with the purchase of
4 Olympia Fields. Back then, this community was
5 opposed to having a hospital within five miles.
6 They said at that time, if you go back into the
7 records, you are going to start diminishing the
8 services that we have here in Chicago Heights,
9 little by little, it's going to move over. And
10 sure enough, over the last 10 to 15 years, all the
11 services have been moved over.

12 And back then, we were saying that we are
13 going to have transportation problems, we will
14 solve those for you, we are going to provide you
15 five shuttle buses between the two campuses so we
16 can get you to those services in Olympia Fields.
17 That never happened. I've yet to see those five
18 shuttle buses.

19 So now we are going to wish that there's
20 going to be a -- we are going to work two years on
21 solving that transportation problem. If you
22 couldn't give us five shuttle buses in the last 15
23 years, what makes us think that you are going to
24 solve a transportation problem when critical lives

1 are at stake within the next two years?

2 According to (inaudible), the emergency
3 calls that come into St. James, they are proposing
4 that 70 percent of those will now go to
5 Olympia Fields. This is the big concern that we
6 have. We have 40,000 emergency calls, 3500 just
7 in our ambulance calls, that now we are going to
8 have to make those runs to Olympia Fields. If you
9 start looking at how they are proposing this
10 emergency, when they put out literature that says
11 we are going to double the size of the emergency
12 room, and you look at the construction contract,
13 and we see that it's a 19,000 square feet existing
14 building, and now you are going to put in 20,000,
15 you are only increasing it by 10 percent, you are
16 not doubling the emergency room.

17 So then we look at the emergency bays.
18 Right now we have 22 emergency room bays at
19 St. James and we have 22 at Olympia Fields.
20 That's 44. Forty-four emergency bays that take
21 care of 35,000 emergency visits and 40,000
22 emergency visits in Chicago Heights. And we are
23 going to double. So if anybody doubles 44, you
24 get 84. But if you look at the Certificate of

1 Need Application that they put in Olympia Fields,
2 it's not 88, it's 32. In fact, they are reducing
3 the emergency bays by 30 percent, rather than
4 doubling.

5 This is a concern to us. We need to know
6 that we are going to get the ambulances back. We
7 know that we can't have our ambulances stuck in
8 Olympia Fields, because we weren't part of the
9 process. Our first responders weren't sitting at
10 the table saying this will work or this may not
11 work.

12 What we have as we started discussions
13 over the last two weeks to see exactly can we
14 start maybe amending some of these applications so
15 we can address the needs of this community, not
16 just Chicago Heights. This goes all the way down
17 to Beecher when it comes to transport time.

18 We have to work with this St. James
19 organization to come up with a win-win situation
20 that does not diminish the quality of health care
21 in our region. We cannot sit here and just buy
22 and drink the Kool-Aid that we're thinking that
23 this plan is going to work and at the same time
24 it's going to jeopardize lives.

1 To get to the 32 bays, there's a state
2 formula, and it consists of 64,000 visits, because
3 that's the only -- that's the most bays they can
4 have. So how do you get to that 32 bays when you
5 start looking at that application? You have to
6 back into it. The way you back into it, you are
7 saying that 70 percent of the 40,000
8 Chicago Heights calls are going to go to
9 Olympia Fields. So every percent that you are
10 off, it's 400. If it's 75 percent, it's now
11 2,000. If it's 10 percent, if it's 80, now you
12 are looking at 4,000 emergency visits that you
13 cannot accommodate because of the 32 bays and
14 because of this fictitious 70 percent number that
15 you used so the state could look at it and say,
16 yes, they meet the standard.

17 We have the ability now with St. James to
18 start looking at these flaws in the Certificate of
19 Need, to start looking at what has to happen. The
20 way that we can make sure that that 70 percent,
21 that is a made up number, if it turns to 75
22 percent, it will jeopardize the lives of our
23 people trying to get our ambulances back.

24 The way that we can solve this problem is

1 by having a freestanding emergency room in
2 Chicago Heights that allows ambulances to stop
3 there if there's overcrowding in Olympia Fields,
4 if we can't get our ambulances back, we should
5 have a backup plan, and the backup plan has to be
6 a freestanding emergency building that the state
7 will allow.

8 I am going to finish up my comments
9 because, you know, I know this is important, and
10 obviously there's no way that I can explain to you
11 in the three to five minutes, I appreciate that I
12 have gotten some extra time.

13 But to St. James' credit, they are
14 starting to talk to us the last week, we are going
15 to communicate with them, but I can guarantee you
16 as the Mayor of the City of Chicago Heights, I
17 cannot sign off on the current Certificate of
18 Exemption, or the Certificate of Need, as it's
19 been filed, because it will jeopardize the
20 livelihood of my residents, and not only the
21 residents in
22 Chicago Heights, but also those towns that
23 surround Chicago Heights.

24 Thank you.

1 MAYOR PETERSON: Thank you, Mayor Gonzalez.

2 My name is Ken Peterson, I am the Mayor
3 of the Village of Steger.

4 I am the Mayor of one of those affected
5 communities. We are south. We have to travel
6 much further to get to Olympia Fields. We have
7 1100 ambulance calls a year, and since I've been
8 mayor -- actually, since I've been on the board,
9 it's been 12 years, we have increased every single
10 year.

11 So you are talking about numbers today,
12 but those numbers, if you talk to every
13 surrounding community, those numbers are growing.
14 So that one percent, it's 400, yeah, but it's
15 going to be 450, 430. It's going to keep growing.
16 This is a problem that's going to just be
17 emphasized with the current Certificate of Need
18 and current Certificate of Exemption that's on
19 record.

20 We are very concerned. There are
21 solutions here. The problem is that no one came
22 to us to talk to us about those solutions to see
23 how we felt, how our first responders felt, what
24 the problems were, how we can work together to

1 solve those.

2 They now have opened up the dialogue in
3 the last 10 days, but, you know, for a project
4 that we are putting \$137 million and trying to get
5 something done in 10 days, it took them years to
6 get that project together, they should have come
7 to the table to begin with to talk with us,
8 because there's a lot of concerns, and it's just
9 concerns not only for us, but for those even that
10 live close to that facility, because if those
11 ambulance start to back up, those ambulance --
12 that could be you, even though you live blocks
13 away from that facility, because you can't get in
14 because of all the congestion, all the problems
15 that are occurring. That's a two-lane road at
16 that facility in Olympia Fields. That's a
17 two-lane road that's going to have a lot of
18 ambulances going through. And, sure, we can put
19 electronics in, we can do things to make the
20 lights change. But you know what? That ambulance
21 going to the facility is going to get the
22 right-of-way. Those coming back to get back into
23 service, to go get that second call back in their
24 communities, they have to follow those traffic

1 signals. They have to go to the side when that
2 ambulance is going through.

3 There's a lot of concerns and a lot of
4 problems. A freestanding emergency room would be
5 something that solves that solution, or is a
6 solution, because it allows that ambulance to take
7 85 percent of the calls to another location and
8 help with that congestion. That's something that,
9 you know, we just started talking about and hope
10 that the St. James organization is committed to
11 continue those conversations and to continue the
12 talk, because right now it could -- those minutes
13 are critical and it affects us. It not only
14 increases cost to the village, to the residents,
15 and it's life threatening, and that's what my
16 concern is.

17 So as it stands today, I am opposed. I
18 will continue. I pledge, I am for better health
19 care. I am for putting money into the system.
20 What I am not for is making problems for our
21 residents. You can throw money at something, but
22 that doesn't mean it's better health care. Better
23 health care solves our problems, and we have some.

24 So again, I am committed, I will continue

1 to work with St. James to do what we can. Our
2 first responders are committed. But until my
3 first responders come to me and tell me that all
4 of my residents are going to be taken care of, I
5 cannot get behind this.

6 Thank you.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Next up we have
8 Charles Rayburn, Maria Borrayo, and either Rosario
9 or Romero Avalos.

10 MR. RAYBURN: Good afternoon. As the next
11 congressman of the Second Congressional District
12 of Illinois, I am here at the request of thousands
13 of my constituents.

14 Good evening. My name is Charles
15 Rayburn.

16 In the true deliberation, in a true
17 meaningful discussion, the exchange of ideas, the
18 analysis of data in support of or against the
19 closing of Franciscan St. James Chicago Heights
20 Hospital, will only lead to the best decision, the
21 right decision, if we understand all of the
22 consequences of that final action taken.

23 Tonight, both mayors, the Mayor of
24 Chicago Heights and Steger, have addressed serious

1 consequences if we make the wrong decision.

2 But everyone, every citizen and community
3 leader, our representatives and government, have
4 to hear and understand the exchange of ideas among
5 each other. If correct, the final actions taken
6 from the day Chicago Heights St. James closes or
7 remains open will positively impact the lives of
8 everyone. This is our goal.

9 Although the community residents that
10 will be affected or impacted if one of 14 of these
11 alliances closes, are being given an opportunity
12 to engage in civil public discussion. Just like
13 the civil public discussion being held to select
14 the next Chicago police superintendent, we have no
15 real vote as to whether the decision to keep it
16 opened or closed will happen. Just like at
17 Chicago State University, we have no vote as to
18 whether it remains opened or closed.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
20 comments.

21 MR. RAYBURN: And we have no vote as to who
22 will be the next superintendent.

23 I am counting the seconds, too, and we
24 are not at two minutes.

1 So then as I wrap up my comments, we
2 are -- thank you. So then -- thank you. So then,
3 what we are as deliberate -- in this deliberation
4 as it relates to having authority or not, I agree
5 with both mayors, I support both mayors, and if
6 you want to have me speak more with more time, I
7 would be happy to.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

9 MS. BORRAYO: Good evening. My name is Maria
10 Borrayo. That's M-A-R-I-A. Borrayo,
11 B-O-R-R-A-Y-O. I am here as a concerned citizen.
12 I work in the community. I've worked, I've lived
13 in Chicago for over 15 years, so this is my
14 community. I have the pleasure of knowing a lot
15 of people in this community, through my job,
16 through church, just through -- so I do consider
17 myself an advocate of the community and that's why
18 I am here today.

19 I think the first thing that concerns me
20 is that I didn't even know about the plan, and
21 this plan has been going on for a while, up until
22 the fall, that must have been like when I heard
23 about this. It concerned me just because from
24 working in this community, I know the large number

1 of people, community members that count on that
2 hospital. They use the emergency room. That's
3 where they deliver their babies. Being that it is
4 so close to their home, they walk to the hospital.

5 So it does concern me when they say,
6 well, you know, consolidate, we are going to save
7 money, it's going to be a better hospital. At the
8 end of the day, we are not thinking about the
9 people. If you think about the community, they do
10 not have reliable transportation, they walk to the
11 hospital. Many people moved in this community
12 because there was a hospital in the area. They
13 wanted to feel safe.

14 It concerns me, yes, we keep talking
15 about the ambulance, how long is it going to take
16 the ambulance to get to this other hospital? We
17 know that --

18 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
19 comments.

20 MS. BORRAYO: -- it's five minutes, but you
21 just never know.

22 Again, it's the community that we have to
23 think about. Since the beginning, the lack of
24 communication, we should have known about this.

1 I represent a large group of Latinos,
2 Spanish-speaking, that I know they want to be up
3 here saying their comments on how they feel, but
4 some of them aren't unable to. So I speak for
5 them, that we need the services to remain here,
6 not an urgent care that is going to be far away
7 when they cannot get to it, because some of these
8 people, they walk or they take public
9 transportation. So keep that in mind.

10 I oppose, and there's a large group here
11 that are with me on the same.

12 So I thank you.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you very much.

14 We also have Mayor Michael Einhorn, come
15 down, Jacqueline Rush, and Tom Amadio.

16 MS. AVALOS: Good evening. My name is
17 Rosario, R-O-S-A-R-I-O, Avalos, A-V-A-L-O-S.

18 I live very close for more than 27 years,
19 and my husband (inaudible) and I here 17 years.
20 My children, when I know have a lot of problems,
21 because it's very close, the hospital, I live only
22 three minutes from the hospital from
23 Chicago Heights, and, please, I don't want to
24 close the hospital in Chicago Heights. My husband

1 is very, very sick. Two times he almost died, but
2 he didn't die, because it's very, very close, only
3 three minutes from the hospital in
4 Chicago Heights. Please, I pray God for not close
5 the hospital.

6 Thank you so much.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

8 MR. EINHORN: Board Members, my name is
9 Michael Einhorn. I am the Village President from
10 the Village of Crete, Illinois.

11 I think, so you can understand my point
12 of view on some things, I think it's important to
13 tell you that I've been doing this for 30 years.
14 I've been in the fire service for 43. I guess,
15 with all due respect to the people who are in
16 favor of this, my guess is you've never been in
17 the back of an ambulance, because I was a
18 paramedic for 26 years, if you've never been in
19 the back of an ambulance while that patient is
20 circling the (inaudible), just waiting to get that
21 person to the hospital, it's a very, very tough
22 spot to be in, and I can tell you that having done
23 that and having that happened to me many times,
24 you can't get to that hospital soon enough.

1 So I will present this to you, kind of
2 like the Crete perspective on this, I will
3 initially start by saying Mayor Gonzalez and
4 Mayor Peterson's comments, I am totally in
5 conjunction with them, they are absolutely right
6 on the money.

7 For the Village of Crete, the kind of
8 problems that we are looking at for this, is that
9 no matter where we go, it's double the time,
10 whether we go to Dyer at St. Margaret's, which is
11 also part of the Franciscan Group, which nobody
12 really has, kind of, talked about tonight, or if
13 we go to Olympia Fields, it's double the time, and
14 it's complicated, there are no direct routes,
15 every which way you go it's a circuitous route.
16 So it's going to require us to be gone from the
17 fire department headquarters at least twice as
18 long, maybe longer.

19 And I am not just thinking about the
20 person that they are taking to the hospital, what
21 happens with that next call? You know, we only
22 have very limited manpower, and when that
23 ambulance is gone, the first thing I worry about
24 as the chief is that when that next call comes in,

1 am I going to have the manpower to be able to
2 handle that?

3 I can tell you that we are understaffed.
4 We don't have the money to make that adjustment.
5 So what am I supposed to do? I lean on my
6 neighbors, that's what happens. And when I lean
7 on my neighbors, guess what? The problems is just
8 transferred from one place to the next, and that
9 is an issue, that's an issue that everybody out
10 South faces, and I don't have a way that we can
11 solve this.

12 Now, when I was thinking about how all
13 this happened, it appears to me that when you look
14 at the history, you have, kind of, bought your way
15 into this problem, you bought the Olympia Fields
16 facility, and then you didn't plan for how you
17 were going to really merge the two together in an
18 acceptable fashion.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please limit your
20 comments.

21 MR. EINHORN: Okay. The problem is, you are
22 leaving us with a big problem, the Village of
23 Crete. It's a problem that I can't solve unless
24 you help me, and the only way you can help me is

1 to keep this emergency room facility open in
2 Chicago Heights.

3 In closing, I would just like to say
4 what's good for you is not good for Crete, and you
5 are leading us to a problem that we cannot solve,
6 and I realize this is an emotional issue, but for
7 the Village of Crete it really is more of a
8 financial issue than anything else, and I don't
9 have a way to handle that.

10 Thank you.

11 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

12 MS. RUSH: Good evening. My name is
13 Jacqueline Rush. J-A-C-Q-U-E-L-I-N-E. Last name
14 Rush, R-U-S-H.

15 I came tonight to voice my opposition to
16 the closing of the St. James facility, but after
17 sitting and listening to all of the wonderful
18 testimonials of how wonderful the new facility is
19 going to be, I'm just left with too many
20 questions.

21 We can talk architectural structure,
22 foundational strength of this building. We can
23 talk about the services as they are going to be
24 presented when they are consolidated and how much

1 better they are going to be. We can talk about,
2 as one staff member talked about, a transformation
3 of services to excellent service. I was always
4 under the impression that when you came, even to
5 this facility, it was excellent service, thank you
6 for that update. We can talk about the efficiency
7 of service delivery and we can talk about quality
8 and service. At the end of the day, if there is
9 no access to service, then we are still at a loss,
10 because if, in fact, people who are indigent and
11 don't have transportation to even get to
12 St. James, it does not matter how excellent the
13 service is in Olympia Fields. Not only that, if I
14 can get to Olympia Fields and it's over capacity,
15 I still do not have access to service.

16 I close in saying, when we are dealing
17 with a constituency in the south suburbs that is
18 represented in Matteson, Ford Heights,
19 University Park, Crete, Park Forest, a poverty --
20 a percentage of 12 to 46 percent of people living
21 in the south suburbs are at or below poverty
22 level. Where is the access for these indigent
23 people?

24 Thank you for your time.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

2 I also have Joseph Stanfa, come down,
3 Oscar Herrera, and Wyatt Rush.

4 MR. AMADIO: Good evening. My name is Tom
5 Amadio. A-M-A-D-I-O. I am the Superintendent of
6 Chicago Heights School District. I represent over
7 3,000 low-income kids. Our school district is one
8 hundred percent low income.

9 Everybody who -- most people who have
10 spoken tonight have given their opinion on why
11 this is going to be better, how it's going to
12 benefit everyone for their sake.

13 Well, my question is, who has asked the
14 kids in our community? I want to give you a
15 visual. Think about the three year olds to the
16 14 year olds, who we represent everyday, who walk
17 the streets, low income, who have nothing. And
18 yet, everyday you turn on the news and why do we
19 continue to devastate the low income areas?
20 Because in a way this is Flint, Michigan. We are
21 the wealthiest nation in the world. We can't
22 offer clean water or health care in
23 Chicago Heights now. That's my question.

24 Nobody seems to care about the little

1 kids that need an opportunity, the hard-working
2 parents that just want an opportunity, because
3 let's be real, everybody here, if you've had a
4 chance, someone has given you an opportunity, but
5 we are taking opportunities away from these
6 parents, and every time you turn around, something
7 is being taken from them, something is being taken
8 from them. And then you ask, why is there crime?
9 Why is there violence?

10 I ask you, put yourself in these kids'
11 shoes. What would you do? What would you do if
12 at eleven o'clock at night something happens to
13 you, you can't get to the hospital?

14 So what's more important is the bottom
15 line, that the CEO of St. James Hospital has to
16 make 20 million instead of 10. Because who cares
17 about the kids?

18 To me, I am sorry, I am sorry, that's
19 cowardness, that's being a coward. You guys want
20 to talk about a building that's 100 years old. So
21 what? I have 10 buildings, they are all 100 years
22 old, we don't walk out. We educate our kids
23 everyday. We don't even have a chance. I would
24 love to go and buy 10 new buildings. We can't.

1 So everybody acts like they know, but you
2 don't know. The people that know are the ones who
3 work in the schools, who are with these kids
4 everyday, and they see when they walk up hungry
5 and tired, beat down by life, and all they want is
6 one chance, and you are taking it away from them.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
8 comments.

9 MR. AMADIO: You are not giving people an
10 opportunity to succeed in this world because it's
11 all about greed and the wealthy people.

12 Let me say this, I went to a Catholic
13 grade school. I was raised Catholic. Today, I am
14 ashamed to say I am a Catholic. I am Christian.
15 I am ashamed to say I am a Catholic, because
16 that's what it's come to. The bottom line for the
17 Sisters walking away from the community, where I
18 was born in, St. James, so were my parents and my
19 kids, all because of the money. And like
20 Mayor Gonzalez said, they are still making money,
21 they are not poor, but let's pay the CEO a lot of
22 money and screw all the little kids who can't have
23 access to health care. I am embarrassed. I am
24 embarrassed.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

2 MR. AMADIO: Thank you.

3 MR. STANFA: My name is Joseph Stanfa.

4 S-T-A-N-F-A. I think you mispronounced it, but
5 that's okay.

6 I am the Bloom Township Highway
7 Commissioner. I am here to talk a little bit
8 about realistic logistics.

9 Every major industrial plant or operation
10 in our township or in our area is basically,
11 except for one place, is basically east of where
12 St. James is right now. If there's an explosion
13 at the Ford plant, Mr. Kimmel, since you and I had
14 a little disagreement about this, I actually timed
15 it out, if there's an explosion at the Ford plant
16 right now, paramedics could probably get to
17 St. James Hospital in about seven minutes on a
18 really good time. They would not make it to
19 Olympia Fields in seven minutes. They may not
20 make it in 17, and they probably wouldn't make it
21 in about 20. Depending if there's a snowstorm and
22 the roads are icy, they are never going to make
23 it.

24 My question is, and to the Board, how can

1 you eliminate an emergency center where almost all
2 the industry requires that almost exactly where
3 it's at not only for the people in the buildings
4 that are working in these industrial areas, but
5 for the residents down south? How much is a life
6 worth because you can't get there in time? No one
7 knows that answer.

8 I don't want to have to say to somebody,
9 well, we let them close St. James emergency room
10 because it was more convenient because they used
11 the money that St. James made for 100 years, and
12 because we are having having a little bit of a
13 hard time, they wanted to move it somewhere else
14 because it was more convenient so they can enjoy
15 their resources. They didn't make an
16 individualistic decision to center that emergency
17 room and leave it where it's at.

18 Now, I don't know if it's true or not,
19 someone told me that an emergency room cannot
20 stand without a hospital. I say, hey, build 10
21 rooms, and if the people have to be hospitalized,
22 then transport them to Olympia Fields. We need
23 that emergency room.

24 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your

1 comments.

2 MR. STANFA: I graciously thank the Board for
3 the time that you've given me.

4 And my point is, if you look on the map
5 and look where major trauma could occur, an
6 explosion, you would know that the right decision
7 would do (inaudible) and let us work with
8 St. James, and, who knows, maybe Ford would
9 contribute to help build a new emergency room.
10 The hospital is old, but we need to keep that
11 emergency room open for all the people, the
12 residents of this township and the entire south
13 suburbs.

14 Thank you.

15 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

16 Oscar Herrera, Wyatt Rush, Leticia
17 Gonzalez.

18 MR. RUSH: My name is Wyatt Rush. W-Y-A-T-T
19 R-U-S-H.

20 As I sit here this evening, I am
21 concerned that St. James' administrators are
22 missing something that's very valuable to us as a
23 community and to their heritage as a hospital.
24 St. Francis was a young man of considerable

1 wealth, who gave his wealth away so that he could
2 make a difference in peoples' lives. Now we want
3 to close the hospital, the St. Francis Hospital in
4 Chicago Heights, so we can get 20 million more on
5 the bottom line. It's not about the money, it's
6 about people. It's about being a people who love
7 people. That was St. Francis. It's about he
8 loved the church. He lived the gospel life. He
9 loved and cared for the least in our society. He
10 gave the most to the poor, the uncared for, the
11 person with no shoes, the person shunned by
12 society.

13 We turn folk away because they don't have
14 medical coverage. I've been to Olympia Fields,
15 and the first question I was asked is "Do you have
16 insurance?" When we lose St. James
17 Chicago Heights, you will not get service without
18 an insurance card, and you need to understand
19 that.

20 Let me close, before I get out of my two
21 minutes. It's St. Francis versus Arnie Kimmel.
22 St. Francis gave the people to make life better.
23 Arnie Kimmel wants to erase the expenses so that
24 he can get a better bottom line.

1 Three points and I am done.

2 Without St. James Chicago Heights,
3 there's tremendous void, there's no hospital from
4 Indiana to I-57. Come on, talk back to me,
5 somebody. No hospital. From Indiana to I-57,
6 without St. James Chicago Heights.

7 People who do not have private insurance
8 coverage will not get service at Olympia Fields
9 like they get in Chicago Heights.

10 I am closing here. Is 20 million more on
11 the bottom line worth the lives that can be lost
12 in the process? My vote is 22. Our friend got
13 shot in Dolton four years ago, his friends put him
14 in the car and rushed him to the hospital, to be
15 told there's no trauma here, you have to take him
16 to 95th Street. He never made it.

17 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Leticia Gonzalez,
18 Representative Anthony DeLuca, and Allen Shander.

19 MR. HERRERA: Good evening, ladies and
20 gentlemen. My name is Oscar Herrera,
21 H-E-R-R-E-R-A, and I am all about upgrading health
22 care, I am all about upgrading our facilities to
23 the 21st Century, because health care is a right,
24 not a privilege, and I believe that we should keep

1 the trauma center and the ER here in
2 Chicago Heights. We have to. They cannot move it
3 away from here.

4 Because, one, they are not taking the
5 opinion of the people, of the people that, with
6 their hard work, support not only Chicago Heights
7 but these surrounding communities, and we need
8 that for this community.

9 God forbid, but if there were to be a
10 terrorist attack on this school where we are, we
11 are looking at a big student body here, a lot of
12 community, a lot of teachers, which I, myself,
13 worked here for nine years, and it would be a
14 tremendous amount of work if Chicago Heights were
15 to be closed. God forbid that, but let's think
16 about it now than tomorrow later.

17 So I encourage all of the citizens to
18 make their voice be heard, because this is
19 something that will have an impact on us in the
20 near future and in the long run as well.

21 So I am here to oppose what's going on,
22 and I support Mayor Gonzalez and the other mayors
23 that have come up here to you. So let our voice
24 be heard and let's work for a better future.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. GONZALEZ: My name is Leticia Gonzalez,
3 that's L-E-T-I-C-I-A, and I am here to oppose the
4 moving of St. James Hospital. I was born there,
5 my kids were born there, I watched my grandmother
6 transition there, and I think that's an important
7 part is that, yes, we all have a sentimental value
8 there at St. James. We are in this community, you
9 pass by it many times, every day, and that's part
10 of being in the community, part of being a
11 Franciscan. He said he was a wealthy man, he let
12 go all of his worldly possessions to help the
13 people in the community, and this is the
14 community, and now you want to forego that for
15 millions of dollars. Is that really part of the
16 mission?

17 We talk about these nuns, and I have yet
18 to see one. We've sent letters. Have we heard
19 back from them? I am insulted. We've been lied
20 to again and again. We've been told that there's
21 no plans December 2014, and all of a sudden the
22 year turns and now there's plans in just a few
23 months. Full plans. Facilities. How does that
24 occur in just a few months? We were lied to,

1 insulted, disregarded. We only had forums because
2 the mayor called it. And then when you come, you
3 come single and represented misinformation, giving
4 us false promises about the development of the
5 land. That's an insult to us. Blatant disregard
6 for us and our feelings, us as the community.

7 Transportation issues. We are going to
8 fix it. We are going to have talks. You're
9 having preliminary talks, when your meeting isn't
10 until after. You are having forums for us when
11 you have already turned in the application.

12 Where is the concern for the people of
13 the community? I don't know. I just think that
14 they are too focused on the bottom line and we
15 need to worry about that bottom line, and that
16 includes the people in the community and how you
17 service them.

18 So in closing, all I am going to say is
19 that I strongly oppose it, I am sorry to get
20 worked up here, and I'm sure I'm not the only
21 person who feels insulted, but I guess thank you
22 for now allowing us to be a part of the
23 discussion, our representatives that we have
24 chosen, and I am sure that moving forward, we can

1 do better, but as of right now I do strongly
2 oppose the closing of
3 St. James Hospital.

4 Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DeLUCA: Hi, folks. Good
6 evening. Hi. My name is Anthony DeLuca.
7 D-e-L-U-C-A. I am the State Representative for
8 this area.

9 I am here to speak to the Board and
10 appeal to the Board. My legislative district
11 stretches from Glenwood, running southwest, to
12 Wilmington. Many of the issues we deal with as
13 legislators are regional, and this is certainly
14 one of them.

15 I represent towns like Flossmoor,
16 Olympia Fields, Park Forest, Matteson,
17 University Park, towns that will not experience a
18 reduction of health care services based on the
19 proposal before us.

20 I also care deeply and have close
21 relationships with towns such as Sauk Village,
22 Beecher, Crete, and Steger, which used to be
23 entirely in my legislative district, and our
24 members of the task force who currently oppose the

1 hospital plan as proposed.

2 But I stand here today as a proud
3 resident of Chicago Heights. So you know, I live
4 in this city. I was the Board of Education
5 president of this historic school that we are in
6 today. I was mayor of Chicago Heights. I've been
7 serving as representative for seven years, which
8 encompasses all of Chicago Heights.

9 My family has owned a business in this
10 town for over 58 years, the largest town in my
11 district, and I will do everything I can to
12 promote and assist the city administration in
13 Chicago Heights.

14 Over the last couple of months, it's been
15 an honor to work closely with Senator Hutchinson,
16 the mayors, the emergency management service, and
17 the St. James Hospital officials.

18 I will share with you that this issue has
19 consumed all of us in an effort to find the best
20 possible outcome. My goal has been, and will
21 continue to be, to work cooperatively and
22 professionally with all the stakeholders to find
23 the best possible outcome for the people in the
24 hospital service area and for the redevelopment of

1 the property on the southeast corner of
2 Chicago Road and Lincoln Highway in
3 Chicago Heights.

4 In our discussions, it was determined 83
5 percent -- 83 percent of the emergency room visits
6 at the Chicago Heights campus could be served in
7 an urgent care facility. It was also determined
8 it would be unduly burdensome financially and time
9 consuming on many of the municipalities providing
10 the ambulance service to transport all the calls
11 to the Olympia Fields campus. Although we do not
12 have specifics at this time, we have appeared to
13 agree on concept.

14 What I can support and what I am prepared
15 to work hard to accomplish is the concept of an
16 advanced urgent care center facility in
17 Chicago Heights, having the ability to accept
18 ambulance delivery, which currently is not
19 allowable and will require a change in the
20 Illinois law and legislative approval in
21 Springfield. It will not be an easy task.

22 Plan B, a freestanding emergency center
23 to be constructed in a manner that will make us
24 proud.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Representative, can
2 you please conclude your comments?

3 REPRESENTATIVE DeLUCA: Yes.

4 It is determined that the direction we
5 go -- that this is the direction we go, and if we
6 are able to accomplish legislative approval, 83
7 percent of the cases will be cared for on
8 Chicago Heights -- in Chicago Heights in a
9 newly-constructed urgent care with the other more
10 serious 17 percent being transported to the
11 Olympia Fields center, which is attached to the
12 inpatient hospital.

13 In the Southland we have become
14 accustomed to what I call regional defeat. It's
15 become part of our psyche, we have become numb to
16 it. We've had some successes, no question, there
17 have been some successes, but we also know
18 Southland Airport and Illiana Expressway are still
19 not open and operating due to outside influence.
20 We know that we had a chance for a Southland
21 casino, which was vetoed after passing both
22 chambers. We all know that our racetrack was
23 closed by the Illinois Racing Board to help build
24 tracks in the Northland.

1 This is why legislators in the Southland
2 must continue to be united and speak with a
3 powerful voice so we can assure good schools, safe
4 neighborhoods, excellent health care, and economic
5 opportunity for all the people in our region.

6 I will continue to be involved in the
7 discussion and I am prepared to work
8 professionally and cooperatively to find solutions
9 and the best possible health care for the people
10 in this area, because we deserve nothing less.

11 Thank you.

12 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

13 Allen Shander, Duron Travis, James
14 Taylor.

15 MR. SHANDER: Good evening. My name is Allen
16 Shander. A-L-L-E-N S-H-A-N-D-E-R. I was born and
17 raised in this town. My dad was born and raised
18 in this town. My kids were all born at St. James.
19 I was a paramedic/firefighter in Chicago Heights
20 for 30 years.

21 I would like to address some of the
22 logistics. Everybody is talking about this --
23 when they started talking in October, the talk was
24 that the ER would stay open in Chicago Heights,

1 and now all of a sudden the talk is we are going
2 to close it. Some people say, well, you can't
3 have a freestanding ER. I would like to point out
4 that Franciscan Health Care just opened a
5 freestanding ER in Munster, which is approximately
6 two miles from their hospital in Dyer and about
7 four to five miles from their hospital in Hammond.

8 So it is doable. It is possible that
9 St. James has done this to accommodate other
10 communities. The people -- I heard the mayor of
11 Olympia Fields, but if St. James gets this wrong,
12 and every ER gets overwhelmed in Olympia Fields,
13 they will go on bypass, which means that the
14 citizens of Olympia Fields will end up someplace
15 else. Maybe Dyer. Maybe Ingalls. Maybe South
16 Sub. But once they go on bypass, that's it, they
17 don't take anymore ambulances, it doesn't make any
18 difference how serious it is, you go someplace
19 else.

20 So in closing, I would like to see them
21 not go off the citizens of Chicago Heights. When
22 they bought (inaudible), the first thing they did
23 was drop the trauma center status, what, within a
24 few years. You know, I am not totally pleased

1 with St. James.

2 At any rate, thank you for your time.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Duron Travis, T.J.

4 Summer, James Taylor.

5 MR. TAYLOR: My name is James Taylor.

6 J-A-M-E-S T-A-Y-L-O-R.

7 Good evening. My name is James Taylor,
8 and I've been observing the issues that have been
9 covered in the media and in the public hearings.
10 I have found that Mayor Gonzalez and his task
11 force tactics have been very detrimental to the
12 image of the Sisters and leadership of Franciscan
13 St. James.

14 As a concerned citizen, a publisher,
15 who's involved in area politics, I find trying to
16 negotiate through media with negative comments and
17 slanderous statements about the Sisters does not
18 make for good relations, especially when I
19 consider what the lead strategist from Sg2, a
20 health care strategic consulting firm, utilized by
21 St. James in the development of the restructuring
22 plan said. He commented that in his 20 years in
23 this industry, no health system has done as much
24 as St. James to involve the community in its

1 planning process.

2 I know that the mayor and the city
3 manager of Olympia Fields attended many of the
4 planning sessions held by St. James. Now,
5 unfortunately, Mayor Gonzalez did not attend any
6 and only sent his staff to one meeting, and yet he
7 has the audacity to claim that he was not
8 consulted.

9 Now, additionally, I know that St. James
10 sent invitations to participate to many of the
11 area municipalities, and those leaders also chose
12 not to attend.

13 Now, furthermore, I find it interesting
14 that Mayor Gonzalez had no relationship to speak
15 up with St. James prior to its restructuring
16 initiative. How could a mayor not have a close,
17 open relationship with his city's largest
18 employer? I find it ironic that he did turn
19 around and criticize St. James for not
20 communicating with him, after he chose not to
21 attend any of the public planning sessions, where
22 he would have had the ample opportunity to
23 productively voice his concerns.

24 Now, this hearing is yet another example

1 of his manipulative tactics by telling his
2 supporters not to show up at this hearing until
3 after six o'clock p.m. tonight. Now, I am not
4 sure what he intends to gain by doing so, but I
5 know it is not in the best interest of this
6 hearing or the issue being discussed here tonight.

7 I do support St. James. How could anyone
8 refuse support of a company willing to invest \$137
9 million in its community? It doesn't make sense
10 to me. Thank you St. James for being open and
11 collaborative in developing your strategic plan.

12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. SUMMER: Good evening. My name is
14 T.J. Summer. I am not a paid employee of the
15 Franciscan Sisters. However, I do want to commend
16 the St. James administration for the great job
17 they did in getting half their staff out here to
18 support the paychecks that they receive every
19 week.

20 What I am -- what I humbly am, with great
21 honor, I was the township supervisor of
22 Bloom Township, so I have the privilege of
23 speaking for the 19,000 residents of
24 Bloom Township tonight.

1 Let's clear something up from the get.
2 The residents of Bloom Township are not against
3 improving health care and they are not against the
4 expansion of the Olympia Fields campus. What they
5 are against is the abandonment of emergency
6 services in Chicago Heights and turning their back
7 on the most needy who don't have access to care.
8 That's what the Bloom Township is against.

9 You talk -- not to get off message, but
10 I am left with no choice, the prior speaker
11 attacked Mayor Gonzalez on his tactics, the truth
12 of the matter is, had it not been for those
13 tactics, there would have been no dialogue
14 whatsoever with St. James Hospital about the
15 impact of this project.

16 So let me do, I guess, what I do best,
17 and that's demand respect, and demand input, and
18 demand partnership when one has not been provided
19 to the city prior to the implementation and
20 approval of this plan. Here's how we are going to
21 do that. I am a lawyer, some people say great,
22 some people say bad, but it does make me capable
23 of reading the law, so I am going to read you a
24 provision of Article 11 of the Constitution of the

1 State of Illinois. It is called Rights of
2 Individuals.

3 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
4 comments. Thank you.

5 MR. SUMMER: Sure.

6 "Each person has the right to a healthful
7 environment. Each person may enforce this right
8 against any party, governmental or private,
9 through appropriate legal proceedings subject to
10 reasonable limitations and regulations, as the
11 General Assembly may provide by law."

12 The fact is the Health Services Act was
13 amended to create an exemption that took away due
14 process and a right to a hearing when it comes to
15 closing a hospital. I don't have time to go into
16 detail, but within the next 30 days I will file a
17 civil action having that portion of the Health
18 Services Act declared unconstitutional.

19 Thank you.

20 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: One more time, Duron
21 Travis, Richard Ceragioli, Karen Nichols, and
22 Leijuana Doss.

23 DR. CERAGIOLI: I am Richard Ceragioli.

24 C-E-R-A-G-I-O-L-I. I think I am speaking to the

1 wrong half of the discussion tonight, but I am an
2 interested individual, likewise.

3 I am a pediatrician with the Franciscan
4 Physician Network. I've been in practice in our
5 community for 23 years and I've lived in the area
6 for over 40 years. I have a wife, and I have
7 three girls that went to Marian High School. I
8 live in the area.

9 I would like to say that I love
10 Chicago Heights. I am involved with many groups
11 and clubs in Chicago Heights. But more
12 importantly, I love the people that live in
13 Chicago Heights and the surrounding areas. It's a
14 very passionate topic that we are having here
15 tonight, and I understand that it's many different
16 ways of looking at this.

17 But from my perspective as a local
18 primary care provider and as a member of the
19 community, I know how important it is to have
20 access to great local medical care and, yes, we
21 have given great medical care in the
22 Chicago Heights. There are some constraints. I
23 see it from the other side. I am not really a
24 paid person, I am private practitioner, but I am

1 in the system.

2 I am confident that our Franciscan
3 Sisters' mission to provide competent,
4 compassionate, and financially sustainable health
5 care to our community aligns with their Franciscan
6 values. I genuinely believe that. I believe
7 their motivations are stellar. You can debate it
8 by some, but I have no debate in that area.

9 This is a daunting responsibility that
10 requires constant feedback and modification that,
11 obviously, we are getting tonight.

12 We have provided health care -- they, I
13 should say, have provided health care in the
14 community for over 100 years. Their level of
15 commitment should be valued, respected, and
16 supported, in my opinion.

17 St. James' plan for Chicago Heights is
18 not only to keep physicians in the community --

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
20 comments.

21 DR. CERAGIOLI: -- and to expand obtaining new
22 physicians.

23 Okay. That's really all I want to say.

24 Thank you very much for your considerations. I

1 think this is a good discussion.

2 Thank you very much.

3 MS. DOSS: Good evening. My name is Leijuana
4 Doss. My first name is spelled L-E-I-J-U-A-N-A.
5 My last name is spelled D, as in David, O-S-S, as
6 in Sam. I am a local attorney, managing real
7 estate broker, business leader, and past Chamber
8 of Commerce president.

9 As a managing broker in the
10 Chicago Heights area, many of my clients asked
11 about health care for the Southland region.
12 St. James' reputation for providing excellent
13 health care services satisfies my clients'
14 concerns. I know that St. James' reorganization
15 to improve its health care services will be
16 welcomed.

17 Also, my past engagements with St. James
18 Health representatives have proven that they are
19 committed to the health care needs of the
20 community. I strongly concur that access to the
21 most needed health care services, including
22 primary care, urgent care, and mental health
23 programming will be enhanced through Franciscan
24 St. James' plans.

1 Thank you for this opportunity to speak
2 to you in support of St. James and its progressive
3 changes.

4 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Gary Nichols, Winston
5 Drain, George Chandler, Michael Shepherd, please
6 come forward.

7 MR. CHANDLER: My name is George Chandler.
8 C-H-A-N-D-L-E-R. I can hardly believe it, but
9 I've lived in the area for 60 years, and my wife
10 and I do support the St. James hospital expansion.

11 This is quite a meeting and it's really
12 very exciting. I hope that all the answers for
13 everybody are solved and the end result is a very
14 positive thing for the area.

15 What we need in the south suburban, what
16 the hospital expansion is going to do is just be a
17 great development for the entire area, for
18 Olympia Fields, all the way out to Frankfort, down
19 to Monee, and into Beecher. I have relatives in
20 Beecher that are currently going to St. James. So
21 it's an economic generator that's going to be a
22 great thing for the entire community.

23 This kind of project itself spurs other
24 economic development. So hopefully, other things

1 are going to happen, maybe something will happen
2 with Lincoln Mall, maybe something will happen
3 with all the industrial areas in Chicago Heights
4 where there's a lot of potential and things that
5 can happen. Let's bring more development to the
6 area, and the hospital is going to be a great way
7 to get that done.

8 One of the things -- I've been sitting
9 here thinking about all the things that have been
10 brought up by the mayor, the mayor, and all the
11 cities and that, maybe the budget needs to be
12 bigger.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Will you please
14 conclude your comments?

15 MR. CHANDLER: With the construction of the
16 properties and of the buildings, of course there's
17 going to be short-term job growth, which was
18 talked about in earlier discussion, but there's
19 also the long-term jobs that are going to be
20 created by the -- by just the development itself.

21 So thank you very much and hopefully all
22 the problems get solved.

23 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

24 After Mr. Drain, we have Michael

1 Shepherd, Chief of Hospital Dr. William McCoy, and
2 Dr. Reddy.

3 MR. DRAIN: Good evening, everyone. Thank you
4 for the opportunity to address you today. My name
5 is Winston Drain. Winston, like the cigarette,
6 Drain, like Draino without the "o." I have been
7 in business in Southland for over 30 years.

8 I am the owner of New Age Medical. New
9 talents and life blood of our community. We can
10 compete with employers from all over the
11 metropolitan Chicago area for talented personnel.
12 Not only do they want to know about our company,
13 but they also want to know about the surrounding
14 communities, the schools, the shopping, the health
15 care and the (inaudible.)

16 We feel that Olympia Fields Hospital is
17 (inaudible) with one exception, the lack of the OB
18 services is the drawback. The OB unit at
19 University of Chicago Heights was 20 years ago,
20 30 years ago, 50 years ago, but not anymore. The
21 movement of the OB to Olympia Fields is a plus for
22 our community.

23 The consolidation of all the services of
24 Olympia Fields makes a lot of sense to me.

1 Thank you.

2 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

3 MR. SHEPHERD: Good evening. My name is
4 Michael Shepherd. It's spelled S-H-E-P-H-E-R-D.

5 I wish everybody would have been here at
6 the earlier session, they would have saw the
7 Sisters, they came out and gave their own
8 testimony, they were here in public. So it's a
9 shame that you all missed it.

10 The restructuring plan put forth by
11 Franciscan St. James Health, I believe the people
12 of Southland deserve to have a world-class
13 hospital with the latest technology, all private
14 rooms, and care under one roof, delivering an
15 improved patient experience.

16 What we all have to understand is that
17 the funds used to sustain St. James Hospital have
18 come from our Indiana hospitals. Franciscan
19 Alliance has more than \$1 billion in debt and
20 needs another 1.5 billion over the next five years
21 to replace hospitals and equipment for all 14 of
22 its hospitals. Our other facilities need to
23 reinvest in their own facilities.

24 This month, Franciscan Alliance borrowed

1 an additional 200 million to begin construction
2 needed on our campuses. Despite the capital
3 required in Indiana, and the heavy losses at
4 St. James, Franciscan Alliance is willing to
5 invest 137 in the Southland ministry. These funds
6 must be spent wisely. We cannot afford to
7 duplicate services within a small geographic area.

8 If the state does not approve our plan,
9 Franciscan St. James will be forced to reevaluate
10 health care services we provide in Southland. We
11 cannot continue to operate two hospitals that are
12 less than 50 percent occupied four-and-a-half
13 miles apart.

14 So if our plan is not passed, our ability
15 to serve, as we do today, may be threatened. I do
16 believe it would be a negative outcome for not
17 only the residents of Chicago Heights, but for the
18 entire Southland.

19 We are determined to provide you and your
20 families with the health care services you
21 deserve -- need and deserve. By consolidating our
22 aging Chicago Heights inpatient facility with our
23 expanded modern hospital in Olympia Fields, our
24 doctors, and nurses, and staff will be better able

1 to provide quality care far into the future.

2 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
3 comments.

4 MR. SHEPHERD: We are passionate about the
5 care in this community. Always have and always
6 will. We do so now by committing our pledged
7 investment. While some have misconstrued our
8 plans, every decision we have made is rooted in
9 our desire to serve. We believe that is what
10 St. Francis would do.

11 DR. McCOY: Good evening. My name is
12 Dr. William McCoy, Chief Apostle, presiding in the
13 economical movement, International Pentecostal
14 Assembly, Brothers Keeper Community Outreach
15 Church, and concerned clergy of the Southland.

16 I thank you all for the opportunity to
17 speak this evening. I have been patient for four
18 hours. For a young man like me, that's pretty
19 good.

20 When I think about St. James'
21 restructuring plan, I am impressed with the plans
22 of the increase primary care service in our
23 community.

24 I would like to apprise you, my wife of

1 48 years suffered a third stroke. If it wasn't
2 for St. James' diligent service, I probably
3 wouldn't have my wife today.

4 I am impressed by the expanding urgent
5 care services, because it's well needed. I am
6 impressed with the plans to bring more physicians
7 into our community. I am impressed with the
8 programs developed by St. James to combat obesity,
9 to combat heart disease, and to combat diabetes.
10 Most of all, to combat the disparities that has
11 been rampant in every community. Thank God we
12 have a mayor to help and support these
13 initiatives.

14 These are service that are needed on a
15 continuing basis. The hospital service will be
16 there on those rare occasions when we need them.

17 I am reminded of a scripture. The love
18 of money is the root of all evil. I hate to see
19 the endeavor of the Sisters be corrupted for a
20 dollar sign. They have shown fortitude through
21 the years of providing services in Chicago Heights
22 and the surrounding areas.

23 I pray that you will be empathetic
24 tonight, and for the discretion of the Board to

1 continue to service and expand our emergency care
2 here at St. James in Chicago Heights. We all are
3 responsible, and we all are our brother's keeper.
4 Let's not let the dollar sign impede the love of
5 God which abides and it should abide in all of us.

6 God bless you.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

8 Dr. Reddy, Karen Nichols, Cindy Brassea,
9 Larry Stewart.

10 DR. REDDY: Still in scrubs, just got in here
11 from work. I am Srinivas Reddy. I am a
12 board-certified cardiologist, not employed by the
13 Sisters. In private practice. I've been there 14
14 years. I am a Medical Director of the Cardiology
15 Service Line.

16 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please spell your
17 last name for the court reporters.

18 DR. REDDY: Reddy. R-E-D-D-Y.

19 The purpose of my testimony is to give my
20 clinical perspective on the proposed closing of
21 the emergency department in Chicago Heights.

22 In 2008, Franciscan St. James
23 consolidated its cath lab services to only
24 St. James Olympia Fields. I have to be honest,

1 many cardiologists, including myself, were very
2 nervous about this. However, economic survival
3 demanded this.

4 Prior to doing this, we worked with EMS,
5 with the network, to ensure that patients who were
6 having a heart attack were transported directly to
7 Olympia Fields rather than Chicago Heights. What
8 we found actually surprised us. Please remember
9 that the mandated goal was a door-to-balloon time
10 of 90 minutes. We found that consolidation of
11 these services led to faster door-to-balloon times
12 than the previous system.

13 This direct transport program has served
14 our patients well. It ensures that our patients
15 receive the care they need, whether it be medical
16 intervention, cardiac catheterization, or open
17 heart surgery in the shortest amount of time
18 possible. Our goal in this process is to have a
19 door-to-balloon time of 90 minutes, and we've
20 achieved the process. That averages a
21 door-to-balloon time of a remarkable 68 minutes in
22 2015.

23 Patients truly needing the services of an
24 emergency department need immediate access to a

1 variety of services, including surgery, an ICU,
2 imaging capabilities, none of which will be
3 provided in the Chicago Heights campus. The
4 direct transport program that we have successfully
5 developed since 2008 and implemented for
6 cardiology patients can, and should be,
7 addressed -- should be expanded to address the
8 needs of all patients in the emergency department
9 service -- for emergency department services, so
10 we have something in place that can hopefully
11 accommodate other patients outside of cardiology.

12 Thank you.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

14 MR. STEWART: My name is Larry Stewart.

15 That's Larry, and then S-T-E-W-A-R-T.

16 I don't want to have a dog in this fight.
17 I do support the transition that's about to take
18 place, not against someone I call a friend, that's
19 Mayor Gonzalez. I understand his purpose on
20 wanting to keep the hospital there, but causing
21 friction, I hear people talking about money, but
22 this is about people and it's basically the heads,
23 the mayor and the CEO of St. James Franciscan.
24 The Sisters were here.

1 I say things like this because St. James
2 saved my life in 2013. I took that ride from
3 St. James to Olympia Fields. I didn't know that's
4 what was going on. Bear with me. I had a
5 pacemaker put in. I thought it had been done
6 there. Instead, they transferred me over to
7 Olympia Fields.

8 I treasure St. James Hospital. I stayed
9 in Room 510 about nine different times over the
10 course of one year. Nine. 510. And then I don't
11 remember the one room I stayed in in
12 Olympia Fields, but it was gorgeous. It was
13 gorgeous. I had one room, wall-to-wall windows.
14 They took great care of me with my potassium
15 levels off, if you all understand what that can
16 cost you.

17 But right now I want to talk about two
18 people, Mr. Kimmel and Mr. Gonzalez. You all have
19 to come together on this, because I talked to both
20 of you all, I understand the strife, the distance.

21 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
22 comments.

23 MR. STEWART: We are dragging communities to
24 fight battles that you can win, one way or

1 another.

2 God bless all Chicago Heights and
3 surrounding communities.

4 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: If we can also have
5 Michael Ross come down, Tom Rogers, and Luciano
6 Panici.

7 MS. BRASSEA: Hello. My name is Cindy
8 Brassea. B-R-A-S-S-E-A. I am currently the Chief
9 Operating Officer at Franciscan St. James Health.

10 I started my nursing career in 1982 and
11 have worked at St. James my entire career. I was
12 born in Chicago Heights and lived in the community
13 most of my 56 years. This is my community as
14 well.

15 I've been to most of the hearings, and
16 I've personally visited many of the fire chiefs,
17 and have been recently involved in conversation
18 with Mayor Gonzalez and other political and EMS
19 leaders.

20 While we all understand the high emotion
21 with the proposed plan, we are grateful to the
22 mayor and other selected political and EMS leaders
23 for the recent conversations that have taken
24 place.

1 It was reassuring to hear Mayor Gonzalez
2 personally say that he understands the need for
3 the CON application and the need to move inpatient
4 beds to Olympia Fields. The recent conversations
5 have allowed us to respond with the following
6 strategies to address their concerns.

7 We will commit to moving the Franciscan
8 Primary Care Clinic to the Professional Office
9 Building in Chicago Heights. This will enhance
10 and improve access for all.

11 We will commit to setting up LiveHealth
12 stations at points of public access within most
13 disadvantaged areas, again to enhance and improve
14 access.

15 We will commit to building a
16 state-of-the-art comprehensive Urgent Care
17 facility to address 85 percent of the patients'
18 needs now coming to the ER.

19 We will commit to working with
20 legislators to improve EMS routes and possibly
21 allow for low level EMS drop offs at the
22 comprehensive Urgent Care Center.

23 All of these responses are not part of
24 the current CON application. However, are a

1 direct result of the many conversations and
2 discussions that we've had. This is our
3 community, and I am convinced we can and will
4 address the health care needs of the Southland
5 residents together. Hopefully, this will help
6 those opposed to seeing the benefits of the
7 current CON application. Thank you.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Michael Ross, Tom
9 Rogers, and Luciano Panici.

10 MR. ROSS: Hello. My name is Michael Ross.
11 R-O-S-S. I am a resident and have deep roots in
12 the Southland. I was born at St. James. I've
13 seen relatives at St. James. My father did one of
14 the additions at St. James with his company.

15 I've been paying attention to the news
16 and the media campaign surrounding St. James from
17 both sides of the issue. It seems to me that for
18 the best of Chicago Heights and the Southland, we
19 should be supporting what St. James is planning to
20 do. They are talking about making \$137 million
21 investment in our area for the good, not the bad,
22 and it's going to improve health care for all of
23 us.

24 I don't know about you, but I can't

1 recall the last time that I heard such a solid
2 investment and commitment being made by any
3 company, any company in Chicago Heights or the
4 surrounding areas.

5 I understand that we are losing a full
6 service hospital in Chicago Heights. I feel that
7 loss, too. But doesn't it make sense to combine
8 the hospitals into newer and better ones? In the
9 process, St. James can recover from running two
10 hospitals that are so closely together and focus
11 on making one facility in Olympia Fields the best
12 that it can be.

13 It could not have been an easy decision
14 for St. James and the Sisters to make, but from my
15 experience with them, I know they did it for the
16 best interest of the area. We should all support
17 St. James and the Sisters.

18 Thank you.

19 CHIEF ROGERS: Hello. My name is Tom Rogers,
20 and I am the Police Chief of Chicago Heights. I
21 am also in my scrubs, but obviously we are always
22 wearing our uniforms. Just like the doctors, we
23 work around the clock.

24 I am not here to bash anyone, but the

1 public hearings that we've been to, we keep
2 hearing about how this will affect the ambulance
3 and the fire services. Well, in case individuals
4 don't know, normally where our fire friends go,
5 the policemen are right there behind them.

6 In the south suburbs, we have issues that
7 go on in the south suburbs, and I don't know if
8 Mr. Kimmel knows this, of how many police calls
9 that we actually answer to St. James
10 Chicago Heights, but it's 200. Two hundred police
11 calls that we answer to St. James Chicago Heights.

12 Now, our police department, we have 81
13 policemen. We are the largest police department
14 in the south suburbs. We can handle that.
15 Olympia Fields Police Department, I don't know.
16 Chief Krull at Olympia Fields, good friend of
17 mine, I am a little nervous for him right now.
18 Because what happens when hell breaks lose, and
19 excuse my French, at St. James Chicago Heights
20 campus, I have enough policemen to handle the
21 problems. When hell breaks lose in
22 Olympia Fields St. James Hospital, Olympia Fields
23 is calling for support. They are calling
24 Matteson. They are calling Homewood. They are

1 calling Chicago Heights. They are calling
2 Glenwood.

3 It's easy for someone to come up here and
4 say, well, Mayor, just put more money in the
5 budget. Well, guess what? Who does that affect?
6 It affects our taxpayers. Put more money in the
7 budget. I wish it was that easy for the chief,
8 because I would be asking for all kinds of money.
9 But the taxpayers and the citizens are the ones
10 that get punished for that.

11 You know, individuals came up here and
12 said the Mayor never responded, or never came to
13 these meetings that we invited him to. Well, the
14 chief of police in the city with a 100 year old
15 hospital, you would think you would contact the
16 Fire Chief and the Police Chief of Chicago Heights
17 and get our opinion on how you should move forward
18 for the protection of the people that will be in
19 those hospitals.

20 I want to work with Olympia Fields and I
21 will help them in any way we can, but to continue
22 to give mutual aid when hell is breaking lose in
23 Olympia Fields St. James Hospital, I am not going
24 to sacrifice taking my policemen off the street

1 when our residents are going to be calling for
2 their need to continue to keep going to
3 Olympia Fields. I believe I can speak for the
4 other chiefs of police in our surrounding towns,
5 because I've spoken to them and every one is a
6 little nervous.

7 I thank you, and I thank you for this
8 opportunity.

9 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

10 MR. PANICI: Good evening. My name is Luciano
11 Panici, Jr. I am a lifelong resident of
12 Chicago Heights, I am a practicing attorney, I am
13 also an elected official in Bloom Township, and an
14 appointed official in a number of south suburban
15 municipalities that are serviced by St. James
16 Hospital, and I've come up here this evening
17 because I want to express my belief that the
18 St. James' restructuring project is shameful.

19 At no point in time were -- or at least
20 not in a timely manner, were any of the people who
21 would be considered community leaders, and forgive
22 me if I consider myself among them, asked or
23 approached or consulted about this project.

24 Earlier there was a village administrator

1 Franciscan Health Alliance, that come up here and
2 talk about how this is a matter of people moving
3 onward with life, and essentially becoming okay
4 with change, and okay with the fact that things
5 are going to progress in a way that they may not
6 necessarily be excited about, that shows me that
7 they've missed the point entirely. This isn't a
8 matter of nostalgia. St. James is here because it
9 services people in a manner that's critical to the
10 people in the south suburbs. There were no impact
11 studies done to determine what this project will
12 hold for those people going forward.

13 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your
14 comments.

15 MR. PANICI: Thank you.

16 So my point here this evening is to say
17 that, essentially, I believe the reason we are at
18 this point is because St. James, or the Franciscan
19 Alliance, realizes they had made a bad business
20 decision in acquiring St. James Olympia Fields,
21 and now the residents of the south suburbs are
22 going to have to suffer as a result of that.

23 Thank you.

24 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: We have Lance

1 Wallace, Charles Deringer, and Jeffrey So.

2 DR. WALLACE: Good evening, everybody. My
3 name is Lance Wallace, and I am a physician who
4 has practiced medicine in the southern suburbs for
5 the last 20 years.

6 It's very interesting and enlightening to
7 hear the comment tonight. I want you to know that
8 I believe very strongly in the economic
9 empowerment of all people regardless of race,
10 color, you know, and I really believe in
11 (inaudible) the southern suburbs.

12 I'm on staff at multiple hospitals in the
13 southern suburbs, Ingalls, South Suburban, and
14 St. James.

15 I want you to understand that health care
16 right now in this country is very tenuous. The
17 economics of health care make it very difficult
18 for a hospital to keep its doors open. You know,
19 that's because of the fundamentals of Medicare.
20 You know, Medicare right now is an upside down
21 pyramid, meaning the number of people wanting
22 services versus the number of people paying to
23 assist them is much greater than it was when
24 Medicare was designed. As a result, the

1 government has enacted policies that make it very
2 hard for a hospital to be successful.

3 Some of these things, you know, I talk
4 about, for example, if a person leaves the
5 hospital, say, for example, with congestive heart
6 failure and comes back 30 days later, well, the
7 hospital doesn't get paid for that, they are
8 holding the hospital responsible for the
9 management of the population, which is fine. I
10 mean, population management is important.
11 St. James is putting a lot of money into that.

12 I can tell you that of the hospitals I go
13 to, in terms of computer system, and part of me as
14 a physician is to provide proactive high-quality
15 care, they have the best system --
16 state-of-the-art system. You come to my office,
17 you been in the hospital, I look at your chart,
18 all the information is there. No other hospital
19 system has that. The Sisters are very much
20 dedicated to managing the population.

21 So a lot of people are talking about
22 coming to the ER, having a heart attack, the
23 emergency situations we have to prevent that.

24 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please conclude your

1 comments.

2 DR. WALLACE: We need to prevent that, and the
3 Sisters are investing wholeheartedly in keeping
4 the population healthier to prevent these
5 problems.

6 Now, I am one hundred percent on board
7 with moving, you know, the services to
8 Olympia Fields, and I urge the Franciscans and the
9 Mayor to work together to make this happen.

10 Thank you.

11 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

12 MR. DERINGER: I am Charles Deringer. I've
13 been in this community for 40 years. I came here
14 to this community on the verge of just after a
15 disaster happened about 40 years ago. I came for
16 a flooding event, in which the Speed School had
17 13 feet of water, our handicapped school, it was a
18 model school at the time. I've been involved in
19 flooding and disasters ever since then. I am
20 retired from the world's largest sanitary
21 district. I've been down in the deep tunnel.
22 I've been around a lot of serious issues.

23 We have a lot of problems facing the
24 south suburbs, and I really think we need to put

1 more towards it on this discussion, for at least a
2 year so we can get to the facts, because a lot of
3 things have happened, even in the last six months.

4 We now have sites available for -- first
5 off, I should explain that I am a Viet Nam
6 veteran, which we don't speak of too much. We
7 have more veterans in the south suburbs than any
8 other area around Chicago. We have more cancer.
9 We have a major study going on right now with
10 cancer. We have a lot of unique needs down here.

11 I think we need to look at, first, that's
12 a wonderful site that just became available, and
13 we look at where the growth is going in the next
14 10 years. You know, it's going to be south of
15 here, and Balmoral Park is within a mile from the
16 airport. Believe it or not, that airport is
17 operational, we can fly experts in and get
18 patients from around the world.

19 We need something like a trauma center
20 for the south suburbs, we don't have anything down
21 here, and that's going to be the central focus of
22 future development. We need a Cleveland Clinic
23 and the VA to build a complex down there. Neither
24 one of these sites presently has enough acreage to

1 develop that kind of a facility. It will take at
2 least 300 acres, if not more.

3 I brought pictures to submit here.

4 Olympia Fields is too small for further
5 development, I think, for the kind of modern
6 medical expanded hospital specialization that's
7 going on.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
9 comments.

10 MR. DERINGER: In summary, University of
11 Illinois is developing a whole new field of
12 medical engineering, which is sort of my
13 background, not medicine, a lot of education
14 engineering, and I think we need to prepare for
15 the future, and I think we need at least a year
16 more to look at the issues and get more people
17 involved.

18 Thank you very much.

19 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: We also have Raul
20 Green, Spencer Solatka, and Patricio Munoz, please
21 come on down.

22 MR. SO: Hello. My name is Jeff So. I am the
23 Vice-President of Business Development at
24 Franciscan St. James Health. That's S-O.

1 Thank you for letting me speak in support
2 of the Franciscan St. James campus consolidation
3 project and to support the Franciscan Alliance.

4 Today, you've heard many testimonies,
5 both in support and opposition to this project.

6 As a point of clarification, today
7 Franciscan St. James on average receives
8 approximately 49 emergency transports per day.
9 That's two per hour. It has been said that EMT
10 calls are increasing. Our data shows that our
11 numbers have been decreasing with time.
12 Virtually, every emergent patient we see in the ER
13 is brought to us by ambulance, by the form of
14 medical transport or by car. The truth is, if you
15 need an emergency department, you're not walking
16 into the hospital and you are not driving
17 yourself.

18 Granted, we need to educate our patients
19 so they know where and when they need to come to
20 the emergency department and when they can be best
21 treated in an urgent care center or primary care
22 clinic.

23 Patients having a heart attack, a stroke,
24 or another major neurological incident are already

1 being taken directly to Olympia Fields by EMS
2 crews.

3 The Olympia Fields ER, which is being
4 expanded, is less than 10 minutes away by
5 ambulance. St. James Chicago Heights Urgent Care
6 Center is moving to a 24/7 schedule and is
7 expanding its size. Additional physicians are and
8 will be opening offices in Chicago Heights.
9 St. James operates a Primary Care Clinic in
10 Chicago Heights.

11 With all these alternatives, we are
12 confident that the patients who we care for on a
13 daily basis will be able to access the care they
14 need and in a setting appropriate for their needs,
15 and less expensive to the patient.

16 This project was designed not only to
17 support the overall health needs of the community
18 we serve, but also increase access to value-based
19 health care, providing the right care at the right
20 time in the right setting.

21 Thank you Board representatives for your
22 time, your attention, and thoughtful
23 consideration. I look forward to seeing you again
24 during the review of our COE and CON application.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

2 MR. GREEN: Hello. My name is Raul Green. I
3 am a resident of Chicago Heights for the last two
4 years.

5 Franciscan St. James should stay where
6 it's at. It's the government's job to tell them
7 that. But if that facility from Chicago Heights
8 moved to Olympia Fields, like \$20 million a year
9 by making profits off them, which does not make
10 any sense at all. They say the hospital profits
11 have been improving, but if it did, health care
12 would be needed for low-income people that really
13 deserve it. Life is more important than a dollar
14 bill.

15 The employment people over there at
16 St. James need the dough in their pockets, not
17 corporations like Motorola, Pepsi, and Bank of
18 America.

19 I am a volunteer over at Midwest Workers
20 Association on the South Side of Chicago, which
21 they don't like it either, what's going on either.
22 This has been going on too long.

23 Something what they all need, medical
24 care and health care is the key, not a dollar

1 sign. People deserve to live. St. James is where
2 they need to stay at, the facility.

3 Thank you very much.

4 MR. MUNOZ: Patricio Munoz. M-U-N-O-Z.

5 Hello, and thanks for the time given to me to
6 express my concern.

7 I've been a citizen -- or a resident of
8 Chicago Heights since 1992. I am speaking on
9 behalf of the poor and those that cannot express
10 their concern on this proposal and the right to
11 know. I want to express our sincere appreciation
12 from Mayor Gonzalez for taking the time to inform
13 the most affected, on his own initiative, about
14 these proposed plans.

15 All my children were born at St. James.
16 I am not opposed to improving health care when the
17 proper steps are taken to assure all the medical
18 needs of the most affected are truly taken into
19 account.

20 Under the current plan, you may improve
21 the health care of those that can't afford it. I
22 would question the ability to serve the needs of
23 all.

24 As I look at what is proposed from the

1 information provided to the residents of
2 Chicago Heights, I only can witness and see the
3 demolition of buildings and the construction of
4 parking lots. I can only conclude that the
5 medical needs of the poor are not being improved
6 under the current proposal.

7 As you know, in emergency situations,
8 seconds count. This is a fact that no one can
9 deny. We will support a plan that will serve
10 everybody's medical needs all the time.

11 Thanks for your time.

12 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: We also have Richard
13 Moutvic, Pamela Meyer, and Sharon Bean can step
14 down.

15 MS. SOLATKA: Hello. My name is Spencer
16 Solatka. S-O-L-A-T-K-A. I would just like to say
17 I attend Bloom High School, which is over 100
18 years old. So the fact that St. James is that old
19 and that's why it should be shut down is
20 irrelevant. It doesn't matter how old the
21 building is because it still saves lives. It
22 doesn't matter who is being transported here,
23 because people are people, and no matter what they
24 did to run into this hospital, or end up needing

1 emergency care, it doesn't matter.

2 So with that being said, all the people
3 who have to suffer from the extra five or 10
4 minute ride to Olympia Fields, it's unjust, in a
5 sense. It doesn't make sense for you to say, oh,
6 it's only X amount of people who could possibly
7 have died in an ambulance ride to this hospital.
8 It doesn't matter if it's just X amount of people,
9 because you have no relation to them. If it was
10 your mother, if it was your father, your brother,
11 even your own child, you would start to care more
12 about what the lives mean rather than just a
13 number or a dollar sign on a page.

14 Thank you.

15 DR. MOUTVIC: Hello. My name is Richard
16 Moutvic. That's M-O-U-T-V-I-C. I've been a
17 physician here at St. James Hospital for -- since
18 1962. I am retired now for about 14, 15 years. I
19 am on the Board of Directors at the hospital.

20 I can tell you that what has impressed me
21 for the number of years that I've been here since
22 '62 is the resolve of the Sisters of this
23 community. They want to take care of the people
24 of this community.

1 There came a time where it was almost
2 impossible for them to do so. I was at a meeting
3 when the head nun from Mishawaka,
4 Sister M.J. Marie, cried when she was told by the
5 consultant group that she would have to close
6 St. James. They were losing so much money, they
7 could not afford to stay open. Things changed.
8 Arnie Kimmel came in, things improved. The
9 Sisters are only losing 5 or 6 million a year now,
10 they said we can handle that, our hospitals in
11 Indiana will help us out, we can handle that.

12 There's no way that you can support two
13 hospitals within four or five miles. There's no
14 way. The duplication of services of everything
15 that goes on, it can't be done. So they decided
16 that the best thing they could do was consolidate.
17 They've got to do it. The alternative is not to
18 have a hospital here at all in Chicago Heights.
19 So they are combining the hospital services and
20 it's going to be better. It's got to be better.
21 They are going to have a regional health center.
22 They are going to have all the equipment they need
23 to be able to take care of us. I am in full
24 support of their movement to do so.

1 Thank you.

2 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Pamela Meyer, Sharon
3 Bean, and Jerri, I'm going to butcher this one,
4 M-L-A-K-A-R.

5 MS. MEYER: My name is Pamela Meyer.
6 M-E-Y-E-R. I am going to read this, since it's
7 limited time and I want to make sure I get to say
8 what I want to say.

9 My name is Pam Meyer. I was born and
10 raised in Chicago Heights. I am involved with the
11 hospital. Five generations of my family have been
12 active volunteers or have worked for St. James.
13 St. James was the first health professional job
14 that I had.

15 I have 40 years of health care service as
16 a medical technologist, nurse, educator, and
17 health care consultants with one of the Big 4
18 international consulting firms and an
19 international law firm.

20 The following statements are based on my
21 own research, knowledge, and my experience within
22 the health care system in the United States.

23 I am very upset with the impending
24 termination of the Chicago Heights inpatient

1 hospital services. However, due to health care
2 reimbursement systems, increasing regulatory
3 compliance demands in an already highly-regulated
4 industry, prescription drug costs, which rose 12.2
5 percent last year, the highest rate increase in 10
6 years, sadly to ensure the continued existence of
7 an inpatient hospital in the far south suburbs for
8 years to come, inpatient operations in
9 Chicago Heights must be terminated and transferred
10 to Olympia Fields.

11 Just to give an example, 65 percent of
12 the inpatient population at both the
13 Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields hospitals is
14 comprised of Medicare, Medicaid, and charity care,
15 and that's for the 2014 Illinois Hospital Report
16 Card.

17 Nationwide, hospitals are losing money on
18 Medicare and Medicaid patients. One example, a
19 patient comes in with congestive heart failure,
20 which is a very common diagnosis for Medicare
21 patients, the hospital bill can be \$39,000.
22 Medicare may pay \$15,000. The one instance I had
23 available to me, the hospital took a loss of
24 \$24,000. That's one patient.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your
2 comments.

3 MS. MEYER: When 65 percent of your population
4 is made up of that, it makes a big difference.

5 Despite the Affordable Care Act,
6 30 million people are still uninsured as of
7 February 7th of this year.

8 Hospitals around the country are in
9 trouble. Sixty-seven hospitals have closed since
10 January 2010 and another 283 hospitals in
11 39 states are presently at risk for closing. Many
12 of these patients don't have to travel more than
13 20 minutes -- or, I am sorry, 90 minutes to get to
14 a hospital.

15 If we want to have a hospital in the
16 immediate south suburban area, there's no choice
17 but to consolidate these services and to best use
18 that money to make the best equipment, the best
19 facility that you can have. Hospitals are in
20 competition now and this is the only way St. James
21 will be able to survive.

22 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you for your
23 comments.

24 DR. BEAN: I should say good night, but if you

1 can bear with me just for a moment. I am
2 Dr. Sharon Bean, not in the capacity of the
3 medical field, but tonight I represent the
4 president of the Original Village Homeowners
5 Association in Olympia Fields. I also represent
6 one of 15 homeowners associations in the village.

7 At this time I would like to take as
8 presented in support of the application to expand
9 the Franciscan St. James Hospital restructuring
10 plan in Olympia Fields.

11 Our association, known as OVHA,
12 encourages the proposed expansion to move forward
13 for the following reasons:

14 It would create more jobs and
15 opportunities for businesses to supply additional
16 goods and services for the extended expanded
17 entity;

18 Increased employment also means
19 additional dollars will be spent in the region for
20 the purchase of gas to get there, restaurants,
21 retail shopping, et cetera;

22 It will increase employment. And by
23 doing so, demand for, perhaps, even local housing;

24 Potential new residents will bolster the

1 enrollment in the regions' schools;

2 New residents are potential candidates
3 for the region's not-for-profit boards.

4 OVHA welcome the expansion of Franciscan
5 St. James Hospital in Olympia Fields.

6 I thank you so much.

7 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you. Jerri
8 Mlakar.

9 MS. MLAKAR: Jerri, J-E-R-R-I, Mlakar,
10 M-L-A-K-A-R. I am a school nurse, registered
11 nurse, and employed by School District 170
12 Chicago Heights, elementary school district.
13 What that means is that my five days a week, I am
14 directly hands-on care with the children of
15 Chicago Heights. My largest school has 500
16 students. It is right within minutes of the
17 St. James Hospital emergency room.

18 I don't know if anyone on the Board has
19 had to, but I have had to call an ambulance
20 numerous times in the course of my career there
21 for someone else's child, and that's a scary thing
22 to have to be responsible to do that for the care
23 of someone else's child, and then to have to let
24 the parent know that you have to call the

1 ambulance. We are talking about many parents who
2 do not speak English, and who do not have
3 transportation to get further. It's hard enough
4 for them to get to St. James.

5 It's always been a great comfort for
6 myself, for the staff, for the family, for the
7 children, that this hospital is so close by. It's
8 not the only one close by, there's another one
9 minutes away with 600 children.

10 So that's the only thing I can look at.
11 We are talking about the lives of children, and we
12 are talking about the families, and I can't
13 really -- that's all I can look at. It's not
14 about dollars and cents to me. If it was, I
15 wouldn't be working in the school district. I
16 would be working at the hospital, because I am
17 qualified to do so.

18 Thank you for your time, but I wish that
19 you would look at it's the children, and that's
20 all it is really about, it's the children of
21 Chicago Heights.

22 Thank you.

23 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Is there anyone who
24 filled out a pink sheet who has not yet had an

1 opportunity to testify? Anyone who has not filled
2 out a sheet who has not had an opportunity to
3 testify?

4 Ma'am, do you want to step up?

5 Ma'am, if you can spell your first and
6 last name. You can come right up to the podium.

7 MS. SAULSBERYN: My name is Linda, L-I-N-D-A,
8 Saulsbery, S-A-U-L-S-B-E-R-Y-N. I have lived in
9 Chicago Heights all my years, 66 years, 66 years
10 I've been in Chicago Heights, okay. I appreciate
11 it. I got -- I forgot how many kids, but I got 56
12 great grandkids, and everybody before that in
13 Chicago Heights stay at this hospital.

14 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Can you speak in the
15 mic, ma'am?

16 MS. SAULSBERYN: St. James Hospital. A lot of
17 people cannot make it to Olympia Fields. A lot of
18 people don't have cars and it's hard to get there.

19 But I respect Mayor Gonzalez, because
20 when I need trees come out of my roof, anybody in
21 Chicago Heights, I respect Mayor Gonzalez. I
22 really respect him, because he's the mayor. He
23 also mayor of Chicago Heights.

24 And I am going to miss St. James

1 Hospital. It's a lot of people don't have cars to
2 get to Olympia Fields, and that's unfortunately,
3 but everybody is going to miss St. James Hospital
4 in Chicago Heights. It's unfortunately.

5 But I respect Chicago Heights Police,
6 Olympia Fields, Homewood, everybody. Because it's
7 so much corruption, you know, kids killing kids,
8 and all this corruption all over the country and
9 stuff, it's just disgusting. And so I appreciate
10 everything that America has in Chicago Heights,
11 and that's it.

12 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you for your
13 comments, ma'am.

14 Come on up, sir.

15 MR. BRUNI: Good evening. My name is Mike
16 Bruni. B-R-U-N-I. I live in Olympia Fields. I
17 filled out a sheet, but don't worry, it's all
18 right. I don't have 56 great grandchildren. I
19 was born, like so many of you, at St. James. With
20 my family having experienced the immeasurable joy
21 of welcoming a new life and the sadness of saying
22 last good-byes. This is an extremely important
23 hospital to all of us.

24 An earlier speaker said that St. Francis

1 gave away a lot of what he had. I think that was
2 a very powerful part of the evening. Because when
3 you really think about it, that's exactly what
4 Sisters of St. Francis have done.

5 When you think about the last 15 years,
6 St. James Chicago Heights and Olympia Fields is
7 experiencing significant losses. Those dollars
8 have been provided to Franciscan St. James Health
9 by the Franciscan System across the border in
10 Indiana, just as St. Francis would do.

11 The success of other hospitals helped
12 subsidize health care in Illinois, which is an
13 incredibly important point for all of us to
14 remember. Because frankly, that's exactly what
15 the Sisters have done in regards to fulfilling
16 their mission, taking care of all of us.

17 Let's be very clear about a couple of
18 facts, and I want to applaud the mayors and the
19 EMS leaders for sitting down and talking to us,
20 because I think we've narrowed it down to a couple
21 of facts.

22 One fact that needs to be clear is that
23 currently we have 22 emergency bays at the
24 Olympia Fields campus. When all of this is said

1 and done, there will be 47. There are four
2 ambulance bays at Olympia Fields. When this is
3 all said and done, there will be eight. That's
4 how we double the size of the emergency room. But
5 the mayor is correct, square footage isn't
6 doubled, but the collective system is able to see
7 a net of three more patients, because we are more
8 than doubling the emergency observation bays at
9 Olympia Fields. That is a fact and let's focus on
10 that.

11 Lastly, and I know what you are going to
12 say, because it's late, we've talked, and we will
13 continue to talk, but it's come down to one issue,
14 and it's very important, the emergency room,
15 because it's scary, and the assurance that we have
16 the ability to transport patients to an emergency
17 room, that's the issue, and all of our EMS friends
18 sitting up in the right-hand corner, and
19 Mayor Gonzalez, we are going to continue to talk
20 about that, because we can work on that and we
21 will do it respectfully, we will do it
22 cooperatively, we will do it together, because
23 that's what St. Francis would do.

24 Thank you.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Mr. Bruni, I

2 apologize that your form was lost.

3 MAYOR GARDINER: I didn't sign in. I didn't

4 know that you had to.

5 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: You have two minutes.

6 MAYOR GARDINER: Okay. I hope we do have that

7 cooperation.

8 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: If you can state your

9 name and spell it for the record?

10 MAYOR GARDINER: My name is Ronald Gardiner,

11 the Mayor of Glenwood.

12 This situation did not start out properly

13 at all. I am a local community mayor, and we did

14 not hear at all from St. James. We did not get a

15 call. I did not get a letter, a homing pigeon.

16 Nothing. So we didn't start out on the best foot.

17 I got a call from Mayor Gonzalez, and,

18 thank goodness, he put together a task force with

19 local mayors. We had meetings. We had hearings.

20 At one of the hearings, from what I understand,

21 the Certification of Objection and the

22 Certification of Need was going to be filed in

23 March. We then found out it was filed in January.

24 Now the last 10 days we've been

1 scrambling. We've had some very productive
2 meetings, I have to agree. We should have had
3 these meetings far in advance of the notification
4 of closing the hospital.

5 My fire chief, Chief Welsh, he heads the
6 Chiefs Association in the area, and he said the
7 closing of the St. James ER is going to wreak
8 havoc in the area.

9 We have limited resources, and the extra
10 minutes to Olympia Fields, if we have a plane
11 crash, and things along those lines, is going to
12 cost lives, just the hold up of ambulances at the
13 ER not able to get back to my town and other towns
14 to take care of immediate patients. So we in the
15 south suburbs have limited resources, and we are
16 not just numbers.

17 We need to continue the negotiations with
18 St. James with a minimum of a standalone ER. We
19 need to continue these negotiations. What we need
20 to do is just tap the brakes a little bit, slow
21 down, and get this thing right. We should
22 continue our negotiations so things are done
23 correctly.

24 Thank you.

1 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you very much.

2 I would like like to ask the Applicant to
3 come up with their closing statement.

4 MR. KIMMEL: I can do this in two minutes.

5 First of all, some facts. The first fact
6 is I wish my salary is what people think it is.

7 Second fact, two years ago our place
8 almost closed, despite the \$230 million in subsidy
9 that was shuffled across the border from Indiana
10 over the prior 10 years. We've improved our
11 operations.

12 Opinion. Our informed professional
13 opinion is that the plan that we've submitted is a
14 sustainable plan. It will mean that we can live
15 up to the Sisters' commitment for the next 100
16 years.

17 Fact. This plan increases access. When
18 we talk about adding primary care physicians,
19 that, by the way, are hard to recruit, we can
20 guarantee it.

21 You may have heard, if you were
22 listening, Dr. Settecase, I believe, talked about
23 our having hired four of the graduating Family
24 Practice residents. First class is graduating in

1 June. We've hired four of the eight. Our pledge
2 is to hire five a year until we've got enough in
3 the Southland and we can tell them where to
4 practice.

5 But last, and most importantly, I will
6 not stand in the public forum and have the
7 Sisters' reputations be smirched. They are not
8 racists. They do not practice apartheid medicine,
9 Mr. Mayor, and that their commitment to the
10 Southland could be questioned only raises
11 questions in my mind that were raised a couple of
12 times tonight, about how any other organization
13 was pledging to commit \$137 million in the
14 Southland would be treated the same way.

15 And the last smear was applause for
16 people who allege that you wouldn't be seen in
17 Olympia Fields if you didn't have insurance. Show
18 me one person who has ever been refused care
19 because they didn't have insurance?

20 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: This is, without a
21 doubt, the longest public hearing that I have ever
22 been a part of.

23 I would like to say thank you very much.
24 I can't tell you how much I appreciate your

1 patience. We had many speakers this evening. For
2 those that did have an opportunity to speak, if I
3 had to cut you off, I apologize for that. For the
4 many individuals whose names I butchered, I also
5 apologize for that as well. But again, thank you
6 very much for coming out this evening and giving
7 your testimony.

8 I would like to conclude by saying that
9 this project is tentatively scheduled for
10 consideration by the Board at its March 29th
11 meeting. That meeting will take place in
12 Bolingbrook, Illinois at the Bolingbrook Golf
13 Course located at 2001 Rodeo Drive. Please refer
14 to the Health Facilities and Services Review
15 Board's website for more details and any possible
16 agenda changes.

17 Our website address is
18 www.hfsrb.illinois.gov.

19 I ask that you also please prepare to
20 take note of the following times and dates, which
21 are also listed on our website.

22 Any person wanting to submit written
23 comments on this project must submit these
24 comments by March 9, 2016.

1 The State Board will post its findings in
2 a State Board staff report, and that report will
3 be made available via the Internet on March 15,
4 2016.

5 The public may submit written comments in
6 support or in opposition of the findings of the
7 Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review
8 Board, and the public will have until 9:00 a.m.
9 March 21st, 2016, to respond.

10 Again, that Internet address, that you
11 can also access the reports and get any other
12 information regarding the Board, is
13 www.hfsrb.illinois.gov.

14 Written comments and responses should be
15 sent to the Illinois Health Facilities and
16 Services Review Board, Attention to Courtney
17 Avery, Administrator, at 525 West Jefferson
18 Street, Second Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62761.

19 Are there any questions? Yes, sir?

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I have the address
21 again?

22 HEARING OFFICER MORADO: No problem.

23 The address again, so you know, is also
24 available on our website, but it is Illinois

1 Health Facilities and Services Review Board,
2 Attention to Courtney Avery, Administrator,
3 525 West Jefferson Street, Second Floor,
4 Springfield, Illinois 62761.

5 Any other questions?

6 Hearing that there are no additional
7 questions or comments, I deem this public hearing
8 adjourned.

9 I thank you again for your participation
10 in today's proceedings.

11 (The public hearing concluded
12 at 9:00 p.m.)

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1 I, PAMELA S. MORGAN, Certified Shorthand
2 Reporter in the State of Illinois, do hereby
3 certify that the above public hearing was recorded
4 stenographically by me and was reduced to
5 typewritten form by means of Computer-Aided
6 Transcription.

7 I further certify that the foregoing
8 transcript is a true, correct and complete record
9 of all proceedings had before me to the best of my
10 ability.

11 I further certify that I am not a
12 relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of
13 the parties, nor financially interested directly
14 or indirectly in this action.

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PAMELA S. MORGAN, C.S.R. 084-001687

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