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St. Alexius Medical Center

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

March 23, 2011

Mr. Dale Galassie
Chairman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street
2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Project 10-089

Dear Chairman Galassie:

I am writing to oppose the proposed hospital construction by Mercy Hospital in Crystal Lake.

I am the Assistant Vice President of Administration for St. Alexius Medical Center. I have 26 years experience in hospital administration, including five years with the Illinois Department of Mental Health.

I am against the construction of a new hospital in Crystal Lake primarily for this reason: It would severely hurt the ability of our hospital and others in our area to provide patients with the quality medical care they deserve.

St. Alexius currently has no problem managing its patient load, and I believe other area hospitals would say the same. We know inpatient hospital bed demand has been steady or declining in the northern Fox Valley area. And population growth has been minimal in the last few years with little expectation for a home building boom.

Because there is not sufficient demand, a new hospital in the area would create an unnecessary duplication of services. In this case, more is not better. Duplication of services does not promote better health care in the region. Instead, it wastes resources and ultimately raises costs for everyone through higher public and private insurance costs. Right now, several hospitals, including St. Alexius, provide comprehensive care to southeastern McHenry County residents. At St. Alexius, our responsibility is to provide critical medical care to underserved and uninsured populations that depend on us as their safety net.

March 23, 2011

Project 10-089

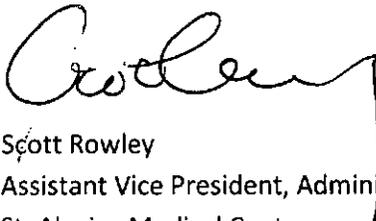
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In contrast, Mercy's proposed hospital would only provide a limited spectrum of care, and only to a narrow, affluent area. The hospital seems designed to "cherry-pick" the area's most profitable patients while avoiding the cost of serving those without the ability to pay for care. Also, Mercy's application indicates that Mercy doctors would send all of their patients to Mercy Hospital, bypassing one, two or sometimes three existing hospitals. How is this good patient care or rational health planning?

Mercy's proposed hospital would only provide the most basic services, meaning that patients in need of advanced care such as a Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or cancer treatment would need to transfer to a full-service medical center like St. Alexius regardless. If you're sick and require a major medical procedure, the last thing you want to do is transfer to another hospital. Adding an extra step to the process only wastes time and resources and detracts from patient care.

For all these reasons, I ask the board to reject Mercy's plan to build a new and unneeded hospital in the area. It would hurt hospitals and ultimately, residents throughout the region. We cannot let this happen. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Rowley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the name.

Scott Rowley
Assistant Vice President, Administration
St. Alexius Medical Center.