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The Civic Federation

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April 14, 2011

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

Re: Project #10-078 – Oak Forest Hospital

Dear Mr. Galassie:

The Civic Federation strongly supports the application by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System to discontinue acute-care hospital services at Oak Forest Hospital.

The decision to close Oak Forest Hospital and turn the existing campus into a comprehensive regional center for outpatient care was the result of a strategic planning process that began in May 2009 and took more than a year. The process included 14 community meetings across Cook County attended by hundreds of people. After considerable deliberation, the five-year strategic plan was approved by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System's Board of Directors in June 2010 and by the Cook County Board of Commissioners in July 2010.

The Civic Federation supported the Health System's strategic planning process and the subsequent decision to refocus the System's limited resources on expanding outpatient services. The Civic Federation agrees with the Health System's conclusion that serving an average of 50 to 60 inpatients a day on a campus with more than a million square feet of facility space is not financially prudent. Oak Forest has offered only limited intensive care service and has routinely transferred the truly critically ill to Stroger Hospital. According to the Health System, 85% of the visits to its emergency room could be treated in an urgent care setting, which would be available at Oak Forest under the strategic plan, along with a wide array of primary, specialty and diagnostic services.

As a 117-year old non-partisan organization dedicated to improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of government services, the Civic Federation has had a long history of examining budget issues relating to Cook County government. The Civic Federation has projected that both the County and its Health System face serious financial challenges going forward. Failure to allow the Health System to restructure itself so it can provide healthcare more efficiently would increase the financial stress on the System and on Cook County.

The Civic Federation appreciates the opportunity to support the application by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System. We urge you and the other members of the Board to grant the permit at your May 10 meeting.

Sincerely,

Laurence Msall
President

cc: Illinois Health Facilities and Review Board
Governor Pat Quinn

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

April 15, 2011

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

Re: Support of Project 10-078, Oak Forest Hospital

Dear Mr. Galassie:

I am the Chief Medical Officer at Parkland Health & Hospital System in Dallas, Texas. Parkland is the public health safety net system in Dallas County, and one of the oldest and largest public hospitals in the nation.

I am writing to support the Certificate of Need application of the Cook County Health & Hospitals System to discontinue inpatient services at Oak Forest Hospital, and then transform Oak Forest into a "Regional Outpatient Center."

I trained in Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Before returning to Parkland, where once I had served as Chief Resident in the Department of Medicine, I was the Chief of the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County (the former Cook County Hospital) from 1999-2007. I chaired the Critical Care Committee of Cook County Hospital from 2003-2007, and I coordinated the transfer of patients from all intensive care units with the move from Cook County Hospital into John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital in December of 2002. In my role at County, I was responsible for oversight and development of processes for transfer of critically ill patients between participating Bureau institutions, including Provident Hospital and Oak Forest Hospital. In all, I had the privilege of serving as a pulmonary care/critical care attending physician within the Bureau and at Cook County Hospital for 12 years, and I continue to practice pulmonary and critical care medicine at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

I understand that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board found that the project proposal would exacerbate a critical care bed need in southern Cook County. I wish to testify from my professional experience with Oak Forest Hospital, that its critical care unit does not render what would be widely regarded as a contemporary standard of care for



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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

April 11, 2011

Mr. Dale Galassie
Acting Chairman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Chairman Galassie:

I am submitting this letter in support of the Cook County Hospitals and Health System Certificate of Need application to discontinue inpatient services at Oak Forest Hospital. By permitting Cook County to reallocate health care resources to a "Regional Outpatient Center" on the Oak Forest campus, the county safety net system will be strengthened through increasing access to essential specialty medical care and diagnostic testing for medically underserved residents.

Since its inception in 1976, Chicago Family Health Center has partnered with the County system to provide ancillary, specialty and inpatient services to our patient base. The vast majority of our patients have availed themselves of the facilities available at the main campus at Stroger Hospital, with some utilizing the Provident center as well. Oak Forest has not been a primary location for our patients to receive care.

As a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), we are a community-based provider of primary and preventive health care services. As you know, our patients are largely Medicaid beneficiaries and uninsured individuals – almost 85% fall into those two categories. We currently rely on our partnership with Cook County to increase access to specialty medical care and diagnostic testing--one of the most challenging access issues for those of us who serve medically underserved patient populations. In 2010, for example, Cook County accepted and served almost 35,000 specialty care and diagnostic testing referrals from more than 70 FQHC locations and other safety net providers in Cook County. We believe providing quick, guaranteed access to these services should be the primary mission of the Cook County system, and that the addition of services at the Oak Forest Campus will improve access to this critical care. We applaud the County's recent addition of transportation services for our patients to enable the access to specialty care for children.

There is still significant unmet need for specialty services within greater Cook County. With the expansion of those services at Oak Forest campus, we anticipate that our patients will

Chairman Dale Galassie

April 14, 2011

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experience significantly reduced wait times, and those who reside in the Southern Cook County suburbs will be able to receive these services without traveling to the John H. Stroger Hospital campus. We further urge the County to prioritize access to specialty services for patients of Federally-Qualified Health Centers.

We support the approval of the CON application, so that the establishment of a comprehensive safety net regional outpatient center at Oak Forest can become a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Warren J. Brodine". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Warren J. Brodine
Chief Executive Officer
Chicago Family Health Center, Inc.



MERCY HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER
 2525 SOUTH MICHIGAN AVENUE
 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60616-2477
 phone 312.567.2000

April 11, 2011

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

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 HEALTH FACILITIES &
 SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Support of Project 10-078

Dear Chairman Galassie:

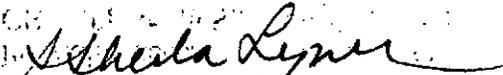
As a Director of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System and as President and CEO of Mercy Hospital and Medical Center on Chicago's South Side, I am writing to urge your approval of the proposed discontinuation of Oak Forest Hospital. I believe the proposal before the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board is an important and much-needed step to transforming access to health care for our area's most needy patients.

Providing access to health care for safety net populations is my mission. Aside from serving as the CEO of a South Side hospital through many challenging times, I have also served as the Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health, and have volunteered on countless committees, boards and initiatives focused on improved safety net access in Chicagoland.

I can attest that the commitment of the System to provide health care to underserved communities is unwavering. The System is a leader in the region, providing free medical care to those most in need. The proposed changes to Oak Forest will replace an underutilized and outmoded inpatient facility with new and expanded outpatient, primary and specialty care services. It is a prime example of how we can take leadership to reform healthcare and actually increase access for many areas patients by redirecting them to receive the care and services where they are most needed.

The plan to replace Oak Forest Hospital with a Regional Outpatient Center is good public policy and will allow scarce resources to be put to use by providing more health, wellness and specialty services to communities in the south suburbs.

Sincerely,


 Sister Sheila Lyne, RSM