

**Constantino, Mike**

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**From:** anne.murphy@hklaw.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 20, 2011 12:42 PM  
**To:** Constantino, Mike  
**Attachments:** Oak Forest Ltr.pdf

Another letter of support for Project 10-078 (Proposed Discontinuation of Oak Forest Hospital), for inclusion in the file. I believe this was mailed directly to the Board, but I want to be certain you receive a copy before the public comment period closes. Thanks.

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Parkland

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.

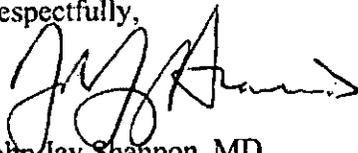
I understand that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board found that the project proposal would exacerbate a critical care bed need in southern Cook County. I wish to testify from my professional experience with Oak Forest Hospital, that its critical care unit does not render what would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

critically ill patients. I have reviewed the Certificate of Need comments on this point, as analyzed by my respected former colleague, Cook County's Dr. Robert Cohen, and agree that the Oak Forest Intensive Care unit does not, and cannot, for the most part, treat truly critically ill patients. In addition to round-the-clock staffing by intensivists, modern critical care requires a hugely diversified support staff including critical care nurses, highly skilled and experienced critical care respiratory therapists, a wide variety of medical, surgical and neurosurgical specialists, and 24/7 support services such as interventional radiology and magnetic resonance imaging. It makes no sense to keep a small unit in a small inpatient environment such as currently exists at Oak Forest. The limitations at Oak Forest make such a proposal a losing game economically, and send a false message of reassurance to the public; the type of unit at Oak Forest is not a modern intensive care unit. Oak Forest would do best to stabilize and immediately transfer the critically ill by qualified methods to larger facilities with intensive care services, as is done by many community hospitals across the country today.

Lastly, I note that expansion of specialty ambulatory services as planned for Oak Forest, and as called for more widely in the Cook County Health & Hospitals System Strategic Plan, would address a substantial need in the Cook County safety net. As we witness regularly at Parkland, and as the Massachusetts health reform changes have shown, access to outpatient *specialty* care for the poor and uninsured can be extremely difficult to obtain except from public health systems such as Parkland and Cook County. The plan for development of decentralized foci of regional specialty care proposed by Cook County Health and Hospitals Systems leadership makes infinite sense to me-and is in fact a model that we are developing here as we strive to provide vital services to the citizens of Dallas County.

I would strongly encourage the Board to approve the proposal from Cook County Health and Hospitals System regarding needed changes to services at Oak Forest Hospital.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Jay Shannon", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Jay Shannon, MD

Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer