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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Ms. Courtney Avery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street – Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Applications to Construct new McHenry County Hospitals
Project No. 10-090 ("Centegra")
Project No. 10-089 ("Mercy")

Dear Ms. Avery,

Throughout the consideration of the two McHenry County Hospital proposals referenced above, we have encouraged the Review Board to consider the relative health need of McHenry County residents. As part of this process we had previously submitted discussion of a report conducted by the University of Illinois College of Medicine. That McHenry County study noted the relatively high health care status of McHenry County residents and also focused on what McHenry County residents and leaders believed to be their greatest health care needs. A new additional hospital was not one of the expressed needs.

In our roles as Directors of Community Health, we are constantly evaluating the health of the communities that we serve. We would like to note some significant findings, The County Health Rankings Study, by the very well-respected, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. This additional report reinforces the assessment of McHenry County already enjoys a condition of high health. Further, we anticipate that hospital applicants will argue that because the Board approved a new hospital in St. Clair County it should approve one in McHenry County. The health care needs of the two counties are not the same.

Study Background

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in collaboration with University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute measured the health status of counties throughout the US. The project established 27 health indicators, and ranked the counties in two major areas: (1) Health outcomes and (2) Health factors.

In addition to representatives from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, the research team included representatives from many other leading organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Center for Health Statistics, and the National Association of County and City Health. Further information can be found on the website, <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

Study Findings

McHenry County enjoys a very high health status, ranked the 4th highest on health outcomes and 7th highest on health factors among the 102 Illinois Counties.

The attached results, printed from the study's website, illustrate the high health status and economic prosperity for McHenry County, compared to other Illinois counties. The table also shows the comparable information for St. Clair County, the home county of the recently approved Memorial Hospital-East in Shiloh, Illinois. The table shows the significant contrast between McHenry County and St. Claire County. While McHenry enjoys a high health status and is economically-advantaged, St. Claire County is among the lowest ranked counties in health status and is economically-disadvantaged. For many of the health indicators, McHenry County ranked in the top decile (top 10%) of all Illinois counties while St. Claire County is ranked in the bottom decile (bottom 10%). Key findings of the attached table are:

- McHenry County is ranked 4th highest among the 102 Illinois Counties for Health Outcomes, while St. Clair County is ranked near the bottom at 96th.
- McHenry County is ranked 7th highest among the 102 Illinois counties for Health Factors, while St. Clair County is ranked third from the bottom at 100th.
- One of the most frequently used indicators of community health status is "premature years of life lost" (years of potential life lost before age 75, age-adjusted). McHenry County is ranked 3rd most healthy on this important indicator, while St. Clair County is ranked 96th. The St. Clair rate is twice that of McHenry County; residents of St. Clair County have a much lower opportunity to reach age 75 than do residents of McHenry.
- The percent of low birthweight births is 20% lower in McHenry County than in Illinois, and 28% lower than in St. Clair County.
- McHenry County is economically-advantaged, rated 7th highest county in the State for Social and Economic Factors, compared to the very low, 99th ranking for St. Clair County. As an example, only 6 % of children live in poverty in McHenry County compared to 17% for the state and 24% for St. Clair County. St. Clair County has four times the rate of children living in poverty than does McHenry County.

Poor health indicators and the disadvantaged economic situation in St. Claire County may warrant additional health services. Those same indicators, however, are not prevalent in McHenry County, which may be an indicator of appropriate health care services already being available to the residents of McHenry County.

Sincerely yours,



Julie Mayer

Director of Community Health

Advocate Good Shepherd Hospital



Tina Link

Director of Community Outreach

Sherman Health