

ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

11-037

COMMITTEES:

Chairperson,
Insurance
Vice-Chairperson,
Financial Institutions
Appropriations - General Services
Appropriations - Higher Education
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MONIQUE D. DAVIS
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July 26, 2011

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761

To Whom It May Concern:

Let this letter stand as my request to keep Oak Forest Hospital open and running. Not only can we not afford to lose more jobs but Oak Forest Hospital, with more than 600 beds, provides the rehabilitation, chronic disease and long-term care to the citizens of the Southside of Chicago as well as all of Cook County.

The hospital meets the needs of patients who require medical care and skills-training in a long-term setting. Oak Forest Hospital's inpatient services include: long-term intermediate/supportive care, skilled nursing care, subacute care, comprehensive rehabilitation, and acute care units. Specialty programs include ventilator, palliative and AIDS units, as well as brain injury rehabilitation, pain management, and vocational services.

Oak Forest was one of the first hospitals in the state to establish a program for ventilator-dependent individuals, persons who cannot breathe on their own. The facility now cares for an average of 30-35 patients with ventilator needs who require intensive monitoring and oversight.

Oak Forest Hospital plays a crucial role in providing access to long-term care and rehabilitation services for its patients. Please do not close Oak Forest Hospital.

Sincerely,

Monique D. Davis

July 25, 2011

Dale Galassie, Chairman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
Fax: 217-785-4111

Dear Chairman Galassie:

I am writing in opposition to the proposal (11-037) to discontinue services at Oak Forest Hospital, and I urge you and your fellow board members to deny the request by the Cook County Health and Hospital System to discontinue Oak Forest.

The southern suburb's needs this hospital. The residents have always counted on Oak Forest Hospital to take care of all their needs. NOT a clinic, a hospital.

With our economy, homeless people, lost jobs, and foreclosure the residents haven't any where to go but Oak Forest Hospital.

The fact that our residents with no jobs, homeless, and foreclosure don't have the money for public transportation to travel to Stroger Hospital. A clinic will not work.

Our suburbs are not Chicago, our needs for this hospital goes beyond words.

As an elected official, I come into contact with so many residents who need care and medical help. These same residents are the ones who need and depend on Oak Forest Hospital, not traveling on public transportation for three hours to get to Stroger hospital.

After a review of the discontinuation request in March and May of this year, the Illinois Health and Hospital Review Board concluded that "The proposed project does not appear to be in conformance with the discontinuation review criterion (77IAC 1110.130)". The Board concluded that the Oak Forest proposal would increase the number of intensive care / long-term care beds needed and cause a capacity crunch at surrounding hospitals. The current proposal from the county does nothing to address these concerns.

The mission of the Cook County Health and Hospitals System is "To deliver integrated health services with dignity and respect regardless of a patient's ability to pay; and, foster partnerships with other health providers and communities to enhance the health of the public; and, advocate for policies, which promote and protect the physical, mental and social well-being of the people of Cook County".

The proposed changes to Oak Forest Hospital are in violation of this mission. For these reasons, we ask you to deny the County's request.

Sincerely,



Donna A. Barron
Alderman 4th. Ward
City of Markham

