

January 14, 2012

Ms. Courtney R. Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson
2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

RE: Letter of Support – Proposed Replacement St. Joseph's Hospital- Project # 11-105 & #11-106

Dear Ms. Avery:

Please accept this letter as a statement of my support regarding St. Joseph's Hospital's Certificate of Need application filed with your agency regarding plans to build a new replacement hospital facility in Highland, IL.

Since 1878, St. Joseph's Hospital has served the Highland area by continuing their commitment to care for the sick, poor and needy as a healing ministry of Jesus Christ established by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis. Although the hospital has made improvements to its current 64-year old building as it stands today, the current facility lacks the ability to meet future healthcare reform and service requirements. Additionally, the current four-acre site in Highland is land locked and unable to accommodate needed expansion and growth as the health care needs of local residents will continue to change.

We are fortunate in that our population continues to grow; however with that growth comes the need to expand our services, particularly to those who are most in need and rely most heavily on our presence here. The elderly depend on our Meals on Wheels made and distributed from our hospital kitchen; those with pulmonary and heart rehab needs can work with our staff locally; we have recently added a senior renewal center where families can find a facility for their relatives who may be experiencing depression and/or any mental issues associated with the aged.

Our emergency department is used by the entire surrounding area, and our staff there is second to none. We have tried to accommodate the growing number of patients with a recent renovation, but there is still too long of a wait, and no more room for us to expand. We continue to add physicians to provide the services that are needed by our citizens, but we are constrained by the physical plant in which we now operate, and technology that needs to be updated.

We are blessed that we are a hospital supported by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, and that they are willing to provide the funding necessary to pursue the mission of the entire HSHS family. Because of them, we will be able to serve the most needy in our area with the construction of a spacious facility with room to expand in the future.

I am a Highland native, and have served on various boards my entire life which has enabled me to interact with the people of our town. Everyone supports the need for a new hospital. I am currently a member of the St. Joseph's Hospital Board of Directors, and can honestly say that I have never been more proud of our leadership, and more confident that our leadership team can take us into the 21st century of health care with the approval of the construction of our new facility. It is needed, and it will be supported by the entire surrounding area.

On behalf of the more than 500 colleagues, physicians and volunteers of St. Joseph's Hospital, I respectfully ask the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to support Project #11-105 and #11-106.

Sincerely,


Bonnie L. McGinley

Bonnie McGinley
PO Box 81
Highland, IL 62249