



# SIU School of Medicine

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HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Ms. Courtney Avery, Administrator  
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
525 West Jefferson (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Project 13-069, Memorial Hospital of Carbondale, Carbondale

Dear Ms. Avery,

I am writing to offer my support for Memorial Hospital of Carbondale's planned expansion, in particular the development of their Cancer Institute.

The Southern Illinois University School of Medicine includes the southernmost 63 counties as its service area, and this most certainly includes Jackson County and the surrounding counties in the lower section of Illinois. Through our Simmons Cancer Institute at Southern Illinois University in Springfield, we have conducted careful analysis of the cancer burden of people in central and southern Illinois, and have found a significant disparity with high rates of cancer afflicting the people of southern Illinois. This especially pertains to lung cancer, where the mortality rate for lung cancer in the southern 16 counties of Illinois is 30% higher than that seen in the rest of the nation. The cancer program at Southern Illinois Healthcare has made significant efforts to address this problem, but it is important for them to be able to bring the most modern facilities and expanded capacity to care for these patients. New facilities for cardiothoracic surgical procedures which will benefit these patients are especially important. I am not aware that any other facility in the region can offer the capacity or the technical capabilities to perform these procedures for the population of patients in need in the southern Illinois area.

Some of the work we have done to document the lung cancer disparities is included in the epidemiologic reports at the Illinois State Cancer registry website. In addition, other information is available in internal documents at the SIU School of Medicine. I would be happy to share this information with you at your request. All of it supports the need for the new expansion of cancer facilities and services at Carbondale Memorial Hospital.

In summary, on behalf of the Simmons Cancer Institute at the SIU School of Medicine, I offer my support for the development of new cancer care facilities for the Southern Illinois Healthcare organization.

Sincerely,



David E. Steward, MD, MPH  
Associate Dean, Community Health and Service

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