

Susan Garrett
1181 Melody Road
Lake Forest, IL. 60045

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

February 6, 2014

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

RE: Project No. 14-006

Dear Chairwoman Olson:

I am writing to express my support for the campus revitalization project being undertaken by Northwestern Lake Forest Hospital (NLFH), which includes constructing a replacement hospital on the current hospital site. I respectfully urge the Health Facilities Services and Review Board (Review Board) to approve a permit for the project.

The Review Board unanimously approved NLFH's Master Design Permit on September 24, 2013 with no opposition. The project meets IHFPB standards regarding project cost and is substantially compliant with standards regarding size and utilization.

Please note also that the City of Lake Forest recently approved NLFH's Campus Master Land Use Plan. As part of its extensive review process which took over 18 months, the City of Lake Forest established a special Hospital Advisory Committee to review NLFH's proposal and ask NLFH leadership and their project management team critical questions regarding the project on behalf of the community. I was honored to have served as a member of the Hospital Advisory Committee and as such learned first-hand how critically important the replacement hospital is for our community.

NLFH has served the greater Lake County community for more than a century. This project **affirms NLFH's continued commitment to serving the residents of our community regardless of ability to pay.** NLFH's vision is to further expand access to primary and specialty care by bringing nationally recognized physicians and innovative research to the hospital campus. NLFH has also worked to save Lake County's only free clinic (HealthReach) from closing by facilitating a merger with Erie Family Health Centers, a leading federally-qualified health center (FQHC), thus saving the medical home for 6,000 underserved Lake County residents. NLFH and Erie will further expand on this collaboration to bring a new primary care medical residency program as well as a new FQHC site to Lake County, which will bring additional access to primary health care services for the underserved residents of our community. Please note also that **NLFH is a leading provider of charity care in Lake County** and in 2012 alone provided \$10.2 million in charity care (at cost) - or, 25% of all charity care provided by Lake County hospitals.

In closing, I again express my support for NLFH's application to build a replacement hospital facility and urge the Board to approve NLFH's application, which will benefit our county for decades to come. The existing hospital physical plant has outlived its ability to support the evolving demands associated with providing access to timely, quality health care. The proposed replacement facility is an essential investment in health care for the residents of our community, who will continue to strongly benefit from the top-tier quality of the physicians, nurses and the entire health care team at NLFH.

I thank you for your leadership and your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



The Honorable Susan Garrett