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**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

507 South Augusta Street
O'Fallon, IL 62269
August 22, 2014

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

14-043

RE: In Support of Project #14- St. Elizabeth's Hospital Replacement Hospital in O'Fallon

Dear Ms. Avery:

As a resident of the metro east region, I am writing in support of St. Elizabeth's replacement hospital in O'Fallon, Illinois. Except for two years of service in the United States Army, I have been a resident in the metro east region since 1962. I have degrees from McKendree University (McKendree College at that time) and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. I have taught school in Carlyle, O'Fallon, St. Jacob, Marine, and Troy, retiring from teaching in 2000. After completing security training classes at Belleville Area College (now Southwestern Illinois College), I was employed by St. Elizabeth's Hospital from February, 2000, until October, 2009, at which time I retired.

My wife and I attended O'Fallon United Church of Christ for over 30 years and are now members of Faith Lutheran Church. At both churches we have been active in music and youth programs.

My connections with St. Elizabeth's Hospital have been as a patient, an employee, and a visitor. Many of my family members and friends have been patients at St. Elizabeth's over the years. We have used the emergency room, outpatient services, lab and x-ray services, physicians' office facilities, and pastoral care. We have always received the highest level of competent care delivered with kindness and compassion.

St. Elizabeth's new O'Fallon facility would be of great economic benefit to our community and region and to our family personally. Having this facility close to home would save both time and money. This means a great deal to senior citizens on a fixed income. Looking at the current St. Elizabeth's in contrast to a new facility could be likened to comparing an x-ray with a PET scan. X-rays were a great invention still used as a diagnostic tool, but the PET scan can reveal

so much more detail and often prevent unnecessary surgery. The same is true with facilities. The best hospitals in the 1940's and 1950's cannot compete with the new technologies available today. An aging facility can only be upgraded for so long until it is no longer cost effective or practical.

Having worked in the security department at St. Elizabeth's for over nine years, I walked through most of the hospital every day. I was able to see the aging infrastructure and the heroic efforts being made to keep everything working at peak efficiency for the aging technology. The staff should be commended for their efforts.

As the O'Fallon-Shiloh-Fairview Heights area continues to grow, our need for expanded medical services will also grow. Urgent care facilities can only go so far in providing needed services. A full-service hospital which can provide for patients without transporting them to other facilities is what our rapidly growing region requires.

Thank you, and I urge you to approve St. Elizabeth's replacement hospital in O'Fallon, Illinois, to enhance health care for all residents of the metro east area.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles E. Claxton, Jr.".

Charles E. Claxton, Jr.