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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

September 28, 2014

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

RE: PROJECT #14-043/LETTER OF OPPOSITION

Dear Ms. Avery:

At a recent public forum, Maryann Reese, the President and CEO of St. Elizabeth's, stated, "No hospital is built today without being on an interstate." Perhaps Ms. Reese should have thought a bit longer prior to making those comments. The system by which she is employed recently built a replacement hospital in Highland, IL; however, they did not locate that facility along Interstate 70 in Highland. They located the facility in the town of Highland itself, near the high school, junior high school, and a residential area. There is plenty of land available near Interstate 70 in Highland, yet the Hospital Sisters Health System, chose to build the new hospital in town, among the people whom most rely on it for services. If you buy into the assumptions of Ms. Reese, the only towns in Illinois that would contain a hospital would be those located adjacent to an interstate highway. I firmly believe the main reason that St. Elizabeth's has chosen to move to O'Fallon is to achieve a more affluent payer mix which directly contradicts Catholic doctrine and their stated mission.

St. Elizabeth's move to O'Fallon would leave the Belleville community and small towns to the south greatly under served. Memorial Hospital in Belleville would be strained to handle the influx of ICU and Emergency Room admissions if St. Elizabeth's in Belleville closed its doors. Patients would suffer.

Every second counts when it is a life or death situation. Whether it is a heart attack or a car accident as little as 2 or 3 minutes can be the difference between life and death. St. Elizabeth's emergency room serves an important need in the Belleville area and communities to the south. It may only take an ambulance 4-5 minutes longer to reach Memorial Hospital in Belleville but how many lives will that 4-5 minute travel time affect? **Belleville needs two hospitals.** It is as simple as that.

For the reasons stated above, I am opposing the application for project #14-043.

I appreciate your consideration and thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,



Kathy Oertel

Cc: Mike Constantio