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COLLEGE OF NURSING
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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

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

Dear Ms. Avery:

I am writing in my role as Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at Rush University Medical Center, in support of the Master Design CON for a new comprehensive outpatient building on the Rush campus.

Our department provides services to a vulnerable, often disenfranchised population of patients with psychiatric illness, the majority of whom have Medicaid or other publically funded insurance or are uninsured. The new outpatient building at Rush will improve critical access to care for this underserved population from our surrounding community and the region, by replacing outdated, fragmented facilities in disparate locations with one transformative new facility designed around patient and community needs. In addition to their psychiatric needs, many of our patients have significant concomitant medical illness, and this facility, integrating mental health services with medical services, will facilitate the provision of more optimal, comprehensive care. Further, in addition to supporting team-based care of patients with acute and chronic illness, this building will support the provision of preventive care, immunizations and screening services.

In addition, this new building will facilitate the recognition and ready treatment of psychiatric issues in patients seen in primary care and other medical/surgical clinics. Concomitant mental health issues in medically ill patients contribute to increased rates of hospitalizations, poorer outcomes and increased mortality. This new consolidated facility will facilitate real-time coordination of mental health and medical services, leading to improved health for our patient population.

The new outpatient building at Rush will enable us to provide the highest quality of care for the patients we serve by enabling comprehensive, innovative, multidisciplinary care delivered in an efficient, accessible setting. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark H. Pollack, MD