February 17, 2016

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Robert Cosme
14900 Park Lane
Orland Park, IL 60462

Mrs. Courtney Avery, Administrator
Illinois Department of Public Health
525 W Jefferson, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

RE: Opposed to Palos Hospital South Campus Expansion 16-001

Dear Mrs. Avery,

I am a stroke survivor that joined Palos Health and Fitness Center after my neighbor who was going to the fitness center for cardiac rehab recommended that I join. I have been a member for six years. Since joining the fitness center I have become more independent and my overall outlook on life has become more positive.

Palos Health and Fitness Center is the only fitness center in our community that is certified by the Medical Fitness Association a leading organization dedicated solely to medically integrated wellness and fitness facilities. I feel very comfortable going to Palos Health and Fitness Center because no one looks down on me because of my disabilities; I am not humiliated by my appearance as others are in the same boat as I am, another words I fit in.

Palos Health and Fitness Center is a completely handicap accessible facility, with chair lifts for the pools, family changing rooms that makes it possible for caregivers/spouses to aid members with showers/dressing. All washrooms, locker rooms, showers, and other areas have accessible accommodations like grab bars, and large turning areas. Others fitness centers that the hospital has recommended the members can transfer their memberships to can't accommodate our disabilities in this way.

The fitness center serves a wide range of disabled people both young and old. Autistic children train in the lap pool for Special Olympics; they offer classes for people with MS in the pool and on land, they offer classes for people with Parkinson, and modified classes for people that are disabled with illnesses such as COPD, cancer, heart disease, stroke survivors, dsytonia, osteoarthritis, and many others. No other fitness center in the area can accommodate the disabled as this fitness center has, nor are they willing to as many fitness centers in the area have been called to see if they would and they all said we are welcome to join the regular classes, but they did not offer modified classes for the disabled or the elderly.

Many members have the option of using their Silver Sneakers benefit at LA Fitness and Tinley Park Rec Center which would allow them to use their facilities at no cost, but they prefer to pay for membership at Palos Health and Fitness Center because of the quality of services, knowledge of staff, and because

the members are of the same breed. The facility have filled a niche for disabled people in the community, who need to exercise in order to be healthy and need the support of each other in order to overcome the challenges in life that others do not face. There is a real sense of community among the members at this center.

Closing Palos Health and Fitness center would be devastating to my physical and emotional health and well being. Please don't treat us like road kill, and recognize that you need to take care of your disabled people and senior citizens. I ask that you deny the Certificate of Need that Palos Hospital has requested.

Sincerely,

Robert Cosme