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DEC 11 2017

December 7, 2017

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

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

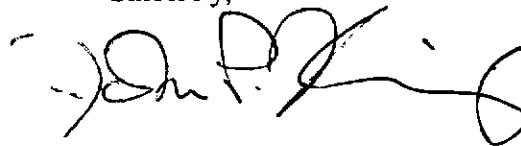
**Re: Project No. 17-048, Lake Behavioral
Hospital**

Dear Ms. Avery:

Please accept the enclosed support letter from Waukegan Mayor, Sam Cunningham for the above referenced project.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



John P. Kniery
Health Care Consultant

JPK/kah

ENCLOSURE(s)



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December 7, 2017

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

RE: Certificate of Need Application

Dear Ms. Avery,

As the Mayor of the City of Waukegan, I am writing in support of US HealthVest's Certificate of Need to expand and enhance behavioral health services on the Vista Medical Center West campus.

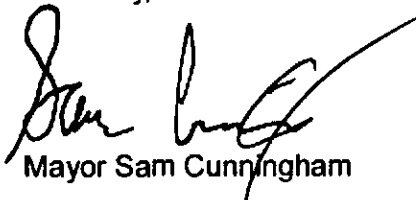
There is an unmet need for specialized psychiatric services resulting in patients being deferred or denied treatment. Approval of this application will increase access to these important services in Waukegan, Lake County and beyond. According to the latest Lake County Community Health Assessment Report, mental health issues affect 23% of adults in Lake County with suicide being the 10th leading cause of death in Lake County. Mental health was the highest priority when identifying and building system capacity.

Currently, patients requiring psychiatric care are over-burdening our local hospital emergency rooms while waiting long periods of time for care in our area. The unfortunate reality is that those patients most in need of psychiatric or substance abuse services become unable to find treatment close to home and do not pursue the much-needed attention that they require because of the distance. In addition, I believe that establishing this facility in Waukegan will not only provide better access to these professional services in our region, but will also offer a central location to ensure that the families of patients seeking treatment will have more involvement in the treatment process. Furthermore, this central access will also benefit by allowing for more timely aftercare options after hospitalization nearer to the patient's home through our already established secondary care options.

US HealthVest is making a significant investment in the renovation of the facility that will revitalize the campus. The new hospital will not only bring more qualified health professionals to Waukegan, but will offer new programs – much needed programs for patients and their family members and more inpatient beds than are currently available.

Please help our community and approve the application to expand behavioral health services at Vista Medical Center West.

Sincerely,



Mayor Sam Cunningham