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March 2, 2018

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**
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Via Personal Delivery

Ms. Kathryn J. Olson
Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and
Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Northgrove Dialysis, Highland (Proj. No. 17-049)

Dear Ms. Olson:

Polsinelli PC represents the applicants for the above-referenced project, DaVita Inc. and Total Renal Care, Inc. (collectively, "DaVita"). We write on behalf of DaVita to further demonstrate the need for the planned 8-station Northgrove Dialysis clinic project to be located in Highland, Illinois, which is situated in Madison County. We appreciate the opportunity to present this additional information and look forward to presenting this proposal to you at the April 17, 2018 Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board meeting.

Hospital Sisters Health System operates an inpatient hospital in Highland and in 2013 completed a \$63 million investment in its services, including the construction of an associated professional building. Despite that strong foundation in health care delivery, Highland does not have a dialysis facility to serve its community. In fact, there is no existing dialysis clinic within a 15 mile radius of the proposed location in Highland. The absence of a local dialysis facility requires patients and their caregivers and transportation services to travel more than 30 miles round trip three days a week using narrow two-lane country roads to access their routine dialysis services. Traveling to a distant clinic is a hardship for ESRD patients, particularly for nursing home patients who are dependent on institutional transportation and shuttle availability as impacted by other residents' health appointments. Of course, this transportation issue is a significant hardship for any patient who has difficulty driving, particularly seniors and those with poor vision or problems ambulating. In inclement weather and in the dark winter months, this drive is daunting for all patients who must leave town to receive dialysis. The Northgrove

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Dialysis clinic will greatly alleviate this travel burden by allowing Highland residents to dialyze in their community.

We reference the 15 mile distance that patients in Highland must travel at this time due to its correlation to the pending HFSRB need determination rules. As you know, DaVita and Fresenius advocated for a travel radius change for ESRD services and that change is currently in process. In the proposed 2nd Notice that the HFSRB submitted to the Illinois Joint Committee on Administrative Rules ("JCAR") in January 2018, the travel radius delineated for ESRD care is a 15-mile radius for Madison County. We believe this change is consistent with providing appropriate access to patients who face significant daily burdens from their disease.

With regard to HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital Highland, DaVita appreciates its support in this endeavor. On average, patients with ESRD are hospitalized twice a year and often for a more extended period. If a DaVita patient is hospitalized at St. Joseph's Hospital Highland, DaVita will work with St. Joseph to coordinate each ESRD patient's discharge plans with his or her dialysis provider to ensure the provider can access necessary clinical information to promote care coordination between the hospital and dialysis unit. These combined efforts improve dialysis care and reduce the risk of re-hospitalization for ESRD patients who might otherwise develop any complications from their illness.

Because Highland is a smaller community, the proposed project is scaled to the needs of Highland ESRD patients with a smaller, 8-station clinic. Despite the community size, these patients deserve convenient access to the health services that preserve their lives. Existing and projected patient numbers demonstrate that Highland residents will greatly benefit from having a dialysis provider in their community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kara Friedman".

Kara M. Friedman

cc: Mary J. Anderson