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Ms. Courtney R Avery, Administrator

HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board

525 West Jefferson, 2nd Floor

Springfield IL 62761

**RE: Opposition to CON 18-042, Quincy Medical Group
Surgery Center in Quincy Illinois**

Dear Ms. Avery:

My name is Debra Love, and I am a Volunteer Chaplain that serves the patients and families at Blessing Health System Hospital and the current Blessing surgery center located at the Quincy Medical Group which is owned and operated by Blessing Health System now since the Quincy Medical Group couldn't maintain the facility and sold it to the Blessing Health System. If the QMG wasn't not able to maintain the surgery center they had at their location, what makes them think that can afford to renovate a store at the mall into a surgery center? There are other reasons why I feel that our community doesn't need another surgery center to be built, especially at a mall at the cost of 4 million to completely remodel a store into a surgery center.

First, that would be a duplication of services and since the current surgery center isn't operating at 100%, it is not even necessary. Blessing and QMG already offer an outpatient surgery center on the QMG campus. Blessing owns the service and QMG manages it. This has been a successful arrangement for more than 10 years now. Blessing would have no role in the proposed center.

There would be damage to the **Safety Net and Community Benefit programs and services**: Much of the revenue Blessing generates from outpatient surgery is used to fulfill its not-for-profit mission of providing Safety Net services to the region. These Safety Net services

include behavioral health care and trauma care. The Institute of Medicines defines the health care safety net as those providers who organize and deliver a significant level of health care and other related services to uninsured, Medicaid, and other vulnerable populations. The health care safety net is vital to the health of our communities and Blessing is the only provider in the region who offers these critical services. Insurance reimbursement does not provide adequate support for the delivery of inpatient behavioral medicine and trauma care. Opening a second surgery center would result in a loss to the current surgery center of nearly 12,000 cases and revenue of \$25-41 million. A significant portion of that revenue is needed by the community to keep Safety Net services operational.

Additionally, as a non-profit healthcare provider, Blessing provides financial support to the education of healthcare professionals at the Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing and Health Services and the SIU Family Medicine Residency Program, an award winning program that provides specialty training to new family physicians; and charity care to those in need of healthcare, regardless of their ability to pay. While these are not Safety Net services, these are important community benefit investments, programs that cannot sustain themselves financially and rely on Blessing's support. The loss of outpatient surgery revenue threatens these and other community benefit programs.

It would negatively affect the community in the loss of jobs for the medical staff currently employed at the current Quincy Medical Group operated by the Blessing Health System. Blessing could lose approximately 400 jobs- 12% of the employee body- through the loss of a significant portion of the outpatient surgery business.

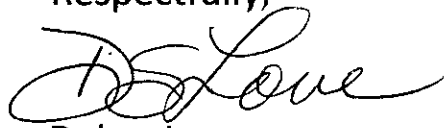
But I think the biggest impact on the community would be felt in the proceeds that are currently being donated back into the community by Blessing Health System because it is a not for profit organization

whereas the proceeds/profits from the Quincy Medical Group would go back to the state of Iowa because it is a for profit company owned by Unity Point of Des Moines Iowa, and a portion of the profits from the proposed center will leave the Quincy area.

I feel it would be in the best interest of the community to see the Quincy Medical Group and Blessing continue to work together to deliver key health services to the community which has been successful with the current outpatient surgery center and with the cancer center. Blessing wants to continue working with QMG, NOT to be put in a position to work against them in improving the health of our communities. The community deserves our cooperation to work together, and find new ways to meet the community healthcare needs.

I respectfully ask that the Health Facilities and Services Review Board deny CON application 18-042 for the Quincy Medical Group in Quincy IL. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Debra Love