



CITY OF
STERLING
ILLINOIS

MAYOR'S OFFICE

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October 30, 2019

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson St. 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to request your approval of the CGH Medical Center's application to open a behavioral health unit in Sterling, Illinois.

I have been the Mayor of Sterling, Illinois since 2011. It is a great honor and responsibility to serve my community. The team of citizens, community organizations, and the City of Sterling is dedicated to creating a community where residents can successfully live and work.

Because CGH Medical Center is a municipal hospital, I have a unique opportunity to understand both sides of the behavioral health crisis facing our community. From the perspective of law enforcement, crime, homelessness, and unemployment, the impact of chronic and acute mental illness tests our ability to preserve and support a community where citizens struggling with mental illness can function productively. From the healthcare perspective, the lack of available behavioral health beds creates a continuous dilemma for our local healthcare team. Addressing the acute behavioral health needs of our community has been a topic at annual Board retreats for several years, but until recently, CGH did not have available space for a dedicated unit.

As Mayor, I am committed to our citizens being able to receive care and treatment at a local level. Knowing our mentally ill residents are regularly transferred one to two hours away for inpatient care is disheartening and frustrating. CGH can remedy a crisis threatening the overall health of our community. They are a Joint Commission accredited, quality driven, patient centered, and highly regarded organization in our community.

I am proud of their leadership for taking on this complex challenge. In a time when hospitals across the state seek to close their behavioral health units, CGH is attacking this epidemic head on.

I respectfully request that you approve their application to support the quality of life in Sterling, Illinois and Whiteside County.

Sincerely,

Charles "Skip" Lee
Mayor, City of Sterling