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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

December 18, 2019

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
c/o Courtney Avery, Administrator
525 W Jefferson St, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Comments for Comprehensive Cancer Center and Proton Therapy

Dear Administrator Avery,

I write regarding the pending CON application of OSF HealthCare (OSF) before the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board to establish a comprehensive cancer center in Peoria, Illinois which will include the installation of a proton beam for less invasive radiation therapy. During this ongoing discussion, I support the review process of the Review Board and their expertise to examine the merits of the application and evaluate the proposal's ability to meet the statutory criteria as it pertains to the Central Illinois region.

OSF's plans to bring state-of-the-art proton beam therapy to Central Illinois will improve health outcomes and prevention efforts for so many patients. Cancer is a top health concern and as newly diagnosed cancer cases continue to increase, the need for therapy grows. In the Peoria area alone, public health experts predict more than 5,000 new adult cancer diagnoses in 2023. With only one other similar proton beam service in Illinois, the establishment of this program within a comprehensive cancer center in Peoria will provide access to people who are unable to effectively relocate to Chicago for a course of treatment. This technology will also improve outcomes and reduce the cost of hospitalizations resulting from adverse outcomes and side effects that are sometimes associated with traditional radiation therapy.

Again, I appreciate the Board's expertise and consideration of this important topic. The Peoria community has wonderful health care providers that are bringing the best technology to the area to treat patients and improve the quality of life in rural communities. As you consider the application within all relevant rules and regulations, I urge you to consider the positive impacts that the decision will have on competition in marketplace, delivery of care and the positive impact on economic development in the area.

Sincerely,

Darin LaHood
Member of Congress

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