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Second Floor
St Louis, Missouri, 63141

August 24, 2020

Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761
courtney.avery@illinois.gov

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Opposition to CON Application #20-017 – Metroeast Endoscopic Surgery Center

Dear Ms. Avery:

I write in opposition to this CON application as a longtime orthopedic surgeon with substantial experience serving patients in the greater St. Louis and Metro East areas. The most obvious reasons to deny Project #20-017 are: (a) its adverse impacts on a Critical Access Hospital, namely HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital – Highland ("SJH"); (b) the reduction of safety net services it will cause for the area, something the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act is designed to safeguard against; and (c) the fact that it unnecessarily duplicates existing hospital services.

That said, a particularly disappointing element of this CON application is its complete disregard of the historic collaboration between SJH and Midwest Bone and Joint Surgery ("MBJS") at the Metroeast Endoscopic Surgery Center ("MESCC"). Such collaboration is critical in rural health care, particularly in this period of pandemic response, and should be protected rather than discarded by the Review Board.

In 2015, at the request of MBJS, SJH invested close to \$1 million on a Mako surgical robot, and has thereafter spent \$120,000 annually for preventative maintenance on the equipment. In 2019, SJH invested another \$290,000 in the "Total Knee Application" software upgrade for the Mako. These were significant investments for a small 25-bed Critical Access Hospital. It is beyond disappointing that MBJS now wants to redirect its surgical cases to a competing facility. It is my sincere hope that the Review Board will further the Illinois public policy of promoting collaboration in health care, particularly in rural areas, and not endorse this CON application.

Sincerely,



Donald Bassman M.D.
Orthopedic Surgeon
845 N New Ballas Ct, Ste E
Creve Coeur, MO 63141

Cc: Mike Constantino
Project Reviewer
Illinois Health Facilities & Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
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