

August 31, 2020

Courtney Avery
Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities & Review Board
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Springfield, IL 62761
courtney.avery@illinois.gov

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Opposition to CON Application #20-17 – Metro East Endoscopic Surgery Center

Dear Ms. Avery:

I respectfully ask that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board (IHFSRB) deny CON Application #20-17. As described therein, Project #20-17 relies entirely on shifting outpatient orthopedic surgeries away from the following rural hospitals, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital - Breese and HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital - Highland. As leading healthcare providers and top employers in southcentral Illinois, I firmly believe approval of the MESC CON will further deplete already weak volumes, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and would likely cause additional job loss.

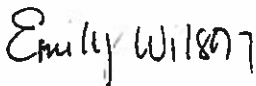
The redirected surgical cases will adversely impact the surgical utilization at both St. Joseph's Hospital - Highland and St. Joseph's Hospital - Breese, which already have been negatively impacted by pandemic-related executive orders to first suspend and thereafter limit elective procedures. For Highland, the 200 redirected procedures represent all orthopedic surgeries and more than 15% of total outpatient volume. That translates into a reduction of \$1.7 million in net hospital revenue, and a loss of \$616,000 in margin. For context, Highland's charity care from outpatient services totals \$640,937, while MESC reports zero charity care on over \$2.3 million in net patient revenue. (CON application, p. 98). This loss of \$1.7 million will negate our community hospitals' ability to provide charity care and to cross-subsidize other services, such as the Emergency Department (which MESC does not and cannot provide).

Additionally, the primary justification offered in support of the MESC project is supposed cost savings that the surgery center would provide as compared to existing hospitals. However, there is no documented cost savings.

In summary, this CON expansion of orthopedic surgery services is another demonstration of severe misuse of resources. If approved, this project will not only add to the overall orthopedic saturation rate within these hospitals' primary service areas but also continue to drive up the cost of healthcare based on pure redundancy.

As a St. Joseph's Hospital - Breese and St. Joseph's Hospital - Highland colleague, I ask that the IHFSRB deny CON Application #20-17.

Sincerely,



Emily Wilson
Foundation Officer

Cc: Mike Constantino
Project Reviewer
Illinois Health Facilities & Review Board