

1                                   BEFORE THE  
2   ILLINOIS HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES REVIEW BOARD  
3  
4  
5   PROJECT #20-030  
6   SARAH BUSH LINCOLN HEALTH CENTER  
7   EFFINGHAM MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING  
8  
9                                   PUBLIC HEARING  
10  
11                                 SEPTEMBER 2, 2020  
12                                 12:00 NOON  
13  
14                                 Thelma Keller Convention Center  
15                                 Holiday Inn  
16                                 1202 North Keller Drive  
17                                 Effingham, Illinois 62401  
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1 APPEARANCES:

2 MR. GEORGE ROATE, Hearing Officer

3 MR. MIKE CONSTANTINO

4 Illinois Department of Public Health  
5 Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
6 535 West Jefferson Street  
7 Springfield, Illinois 62761  
8  
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10  
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12  
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18

19 REPORTED BY:

20 Joyce Lawrence

21 CSR-IL, RPR, CCR-MO

22 Alaris Litigation Services

23 15 S. Old State Capitol Plaza

24 Springfield, Illinois 62701

1 (Hearing commenced at 12:00 p.m.)

2 MR. ROATE: Good afternoon. My name is  
3 George Roate. I am accompanied by Mr. Mike  
4 Constantino, who is out in the lobby at this time.  
5 We are from the Illinois Department of Public Health  
6 and represent the Illinois Health Facilities and  
7 Services Review Board. We are here to conduct a  
8 public hearing on the proposed project known as  
9 Project 20-030, Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center  
10 Effingham Medical Office Building.

11 As per the rules of the Illinois Health  
12 Facilities and Services Review Board, I would like  
13 to read the legal notice into the record.

14 In accordance with the requirements of  
15 the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act, notice  
16 is given of receipt to establish a medical office  
17 building in Effingham, Illinois. Project 2 --  
18 20-030 Effingham Medical Office Building Effingham.  
19 Applicants: Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System and  
20 Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center. The applicants  
21 propose to establish a two-story medical office  
22 building in 65,400 gross square feet of space  
23 located at 1303 West Evergreen Avenue, Effingham.  
24 Project cost: \$36,292,202.

1           A public hearing will take place pursuant  
2   to 20 Illinois -- ILCS 3960. The hearing is  
3   scheduled for Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 12  
4   p.m. and 2 p.m. at the Thelma Keller Convention  
5   Center at the Holiday Inn, 1202 North Keller Drive,  
6   Effingham, Illinois.

7           The public hearing is to be held by the  
8   Illinois Department of Public Health pursuant to the  
9   Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act. The  
10   hearing is open to the public and will afford an  
11   opportunity for parties with interest to present  
12   written and/or verbal comment relevant to the  
13   project. All allegations or assertions should be  
14   relevant to the need for the proposed project and be  
15   supported with two copies of documentation or  
16   materials that are printed or typed on paper, size  
17   8 1/2 inches by 11 inches. Consideration by the  
18   State Board has been tentatively scheduled for  
19   September 22, 2020 Illinois Health Facilities and  
20   Service Review Board meeting.

21           If you have not done so, please sign in  
22   using the appropriate registration forms in the  
23   lobby. One form is for individuals who want to  
24   provide testimony in favor of the project. Another

1 form is for people to provide testimony who oppose  
2 the project. The last form is for individuals to  
3 register their attendance who do not wish to  
4 testify.

5 To ensure that the Illinois Health  
6 Facilities and Services Review Board's public  
7 hearings protect the privacy and maintain the  
8 confidentiality of an individual's health  
9 information, covered entities, as defined by the  
10 Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996, such as  
11 facilities, hospital -- hospital providers, health  
12 plans and health care clearinghouses, submitting  
13 oral or written testimony that discloses protected  
14 health information of individuals shall have a valid  
15 written authorization from that individual. The  
16 authorization shall allow the covered entity to  
17 share the individual's protected health information  
18 at this hearing.

19 To maintain -- to maintain compliance  
20 with COVID-19 health protection protocols, we ask  
21 that all attendees maintain appropriate social  
22 distancing, wear masks, and that no more than 25  
23 attendees occupy the meeting room at any given time.  
24 You will be called to speak in the order in which

1     you signed in, and we ask that you exit the room  
2     immediately after providing your testimony. Those  
3     of you who came with prepared text for your  
4     presentation may choose to submit that text without  
5     giving testimony. However, if you are giving oral  
6     testimony, please be as brief as possible. As per  
7     the legal notice, I would appreciate two copies of  
8     your testimony. When you make your presentation,  
9     please give the court reporter the spelling of your  
10    complete name. If there is a chief spokesperson for  
11    the applicant, we would like that individual to make  
12    the first presentation. The remaining testimony  
13    will be taken in the order of the names on the  
14    registers. Please hold your questions until all  
15    testimony is presented.

16                 And we already have a set list of  
17    presenters, so I'll go ahead and call up the first  
18    presenter.

19                 At this time, we ask Jerry Esker to  
20    please approach the stand.

21                 MR. ESKER: That's Jerry with a J. Last  
22    name Esker, E-s-k-e-r.

23                 All right. Good afternoon everyone. I'm  
24    Jerry Esker. I am the president and CEO of Sarah

1 Bush Lincoln Health Center.

2 Sarah Bush Lincoln has been drawn into a  
3 public debate with a large Springfield company that  
4 owns 100 percent of the hospital here in Effingham.  
5 I would like to make this point clear to the  
6 residents of Effingham: Sarah Bush Lincoln wants no  
7 part of this very divisive conflict. Because the  
8 HSHS Corporation requested a public hearing and  
9 engaged lobbyists and consultants and went to the  
10 media, reached out to legislators and even  
11 unsuccessfully tried to involve the Illinois  
12 Hospital Association in support of their attempt to  
13 block this construction, because of all of those  
14 things, we have been forced to respond in this very  
15 public forum.

16 This is a really, really tough day for  
17 me. I was born in this Effingham hospital, as many  
18 of you know. So was my wife, Lana, sitting here,  
19 and all of our many siblings. My parents, my own  
20 four siblings and their families still live here, as  
21 do many of my wife's family. All of them, along  
22 with several life-long friends and their family live  
23 within the city limits of Effingham or just right  
24 outside.



1 I remember skating at the local rink as a  
2 kid. That's now a 50-year-old building that was  
3 converted to a clothing store -- and I think it was  
4 The World of Clothing; that just came to me -- and  
5 then it was later converted to the Bonutti Clinic.  
6 That's the same Bonutti Clinic building, the  
7 50-year-old building that we are now replacing.

8 I have publicly expressed disappointment  
9 and some surprise. Surprise because we've been told  
10 it's very unusual, highly unusual for a hospital to  
11 oppose the construction of a replacement doctor's  
12 office. And disappointment because there are  
13 efforts to block a project that will bring so much  
14 good to the greater Effingham area. This project  
15 involves millions of dollars in new construction, a  
16 beautiful building sitting right at the intersection  
17 of two of our country's largest interstates. This  
18 is the Crossroads of America, the real Crossroads of  
19 America. It's a building that will house the  
20 nationally recognized Bonutti Orthopedic Clinic and  
21 serve as a symbol for all of the high quality care  
22 that we deliver inside. We asked the architects,  
23 including a firm from Effingham, to design a  
24 building that reflects the pride and entrepreneurial

1 spirit of this community. And if we can all agree  
2 on one thing today, I think we can agree that the  
3 architects delivered.

4 HSHS continues to tell the community it  
5 does not object to a new building, it just has  
6 questions about the size and redundancy of services.  
7 And assuming those questions are genuine, I'm happy  
8 to provide the answers. The additional space is  
9 required to house existing services. The floor plan  
10 is clear. Every square foot is accounted for.  
11 There is no shell space in this building. It would  
12 be cost prohibitive to the point of absurdity to  
13 convert the new space into surgery suites, as has  
14 been suggested. And regarding redundancy, we have  
15 been performing these services in this community for  
16 many years and that will not change regardless of  
17 the outcome of this hearing. And I need to be  
18 really clear about that. There is no service that  
19 we offer our patients in Effingham that will change  
20 regardless of the outcome of this hearing.  
21 The only thing blocking construction of this  
22 building -- the only purpose it will serve will be  
23 to inconvenience our patients and deprive this  
24 community of a boost to economic development.

1                   The HSHS Corporation in Springfield is a  
2   Goliath. Publicly available information released a  
3   few years ago and system report shows a balance of  
4   \$128 million in cash and \$1.5 billion in assets  
5   that's set aside by its Board of Directors to use at  
6   its discretion. Replacement of an outdated office  
7   building with a larger office building will not  
8   place the local hospital at risk of closing its  
9   emergency department. It's not reasonable to even  
10   suggest that. If the local ER closes, it's only  
11   because the corporate owner in Springfield decided  
12   the emergency services in Effingham don't merit the  
13   expenditure. And they are never going to do that.  
14   So many of the people that I love, including my  
15   parents, all of my siblings, live less than ten  
16   minutes from the St. Anthony emergency room. If I  
17   thought there was even a remote possibility of this  
18   project putting emergency services at risk, I would  
19   not be standing here. My integrity is important me.  
20   I care deeply about what my family and friends in  
21   Effingham think of my actions. We're here to do  
22   good. To bring our high brand of high quality  
23   health care -- to bring our brand of high quality  
24   health care, to reinvest our margins directly back

1 into this community, to make the Effingham area  
2 better, stronger, healthier. We're not here to do  
3 harm.

4 I strongly urge the Illinois Health  
5 Facilities and Services Review Board to approve the  
6 Effingham Medical Office Building Project.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

9 Next, I would like to call Theresa  
10 Rutherford to the stand.

11 MS. RUTHERFORD: Theresa, T-h-e-r-e-s-a;  
12 Rutherford, R-u-t-h-e-r-f-o-r-d.

13 Good afternoon. First, thank you to the  
14 Review Board for traveling to Effingham. We  
15 appreciate that and convening this hearing today.  
16 This process was established as a format for  
17 questions, such as ours, to be addressed.

18 My name is Theresa Rutherford and I have  
19 the honor of serving as the President and CEO of  
20 HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital. I appear  
21 today in opposition of CON Project 20-030 as  
22 originally submitted.

23 Please know that this is extraordinarily  
24 rare for St. Anthony's or the Hospital Sisters

1 Health System to oppose a CON application. In the  
2 seven years as St. Anthony's CEO, and for the nine  
3 previous years as a hospital COO, I personally have  
4 never been involved in opposing a CON project. We  
5 cannot find a record at any point in its 144-year  
6 history of St. Anthony's ever before opposing a CON  
7 application. This is not something we do casually  
8 or take lightly.

9 The basis of our opposition is simple, in  
10 my view. As proposed, Project 20-030 will  
11 unnecessarily duplicate existing and presently  
12 underutilized hospital services and redirect away  
13 from the hospital both patients and revenue that  
14 support essential and under-reimbursed hospital  
15 services, associated hospital jobs, and a wide range  
16 of community benefit projects which totaled over  
17 \$11,000,000 last year alone.

18 As anyone involved in health care would  
19 well understand, our concerns over this CON  
20 application are particularly acute, given the harsh  
21 impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on rural  
22 hospitals like ours.

23 The mission of St. Anthony's and the  
24 Hospital Sisters Health System is to reveal and

1     embody Christ's healing love for all people through  
2     our high quality Franciscan health care ministry.  
3     Our hospital is non-profit as a matter of both law  
4     and mission. Hospital revenues are important to us  
5     as a means of supporting our mission of service to  
6     the community.

7                 This is personal for me, also, Jerry.  
8     Thank you. Every day for my immediate family and  
9     also when my seven grandchildren come to spend time  
10    in Effingham, I have the piece of mind knowing that  
11    a high quality hospital with essential services,  
12    like an emergency department, is just 12 minutes  
13    from our door.

14                It's personal for me every time I walk  
15    into our hospital doors. I started my career in  
16    1979 as a nurse's aide. I spent 11 years as a  
17    licensed practical nurse and 30 years as an RN.  
18    Eventually, I became a chief of nursing officer  
19    before assuming leadership roles as COO and now CEO.  
20    Those early years at the bedside, on the front line  
21    of delivering patient care, are deeply engrained in  
22    me.

23                I found my ultimate calling at St.  
24    Anthony's, a federally-designated Sole Community

1 Hospital, where we provide care to everyone who  
2 seeks our services, regardless of financial means.  
3 The core values of St. Anthony's -- respect, care,  
4 competence, and joy -- deeply resonate with me and  
5 the team I lead.

6 Just weeks ago, in response to a  
7 state-ordered curtailment of elective procedures and  
8 associated loss of hospital revenues, it was  
9 heartbreaking to lay off colleagues at St.  
10 Anthony's. I know what that meant to our team and  
11 their families and the communities that we serve.

12 When this CON application was filed, it  
13 omitted the usually included information. We  
14 requested this hearing to get more information. We  
15 have no concerns over the modernization and  
16 replacement of an existing medical office building.  
17 And as a member of this community, I welcome it.  
18 Our concerns and objectives center on the proposed  
19 expansion of existing and new services and the  
20 building size. Our difficulty is with the scope and  
21 scale, not the concept. My concerns are not of HSHS  
22 or Sarah Bush Lincoln, but about the people we  
23 serve. The 23,000 who will need emergency services  
24 in our ER this year, the nearly 700 families who

1 will expand their families and deliver babies in our  
2 hospital. Both, essential services. And the  
3 thousands who will need and use the social services  
4 and programs we support through our community  
5 benefit programming.

6 With more complete information and  
7 appropriate modifications, we ultimately hope to  
8 support this project. Just not as presently  
9 proposed. We have long been good partners with many  
10 of the providers represented by the CON application  
11 in providing health care to Effingham and the  
12 surrounding communities and we do this because the  
13 care of the providers -- the care that these  
14 providers deliver is in the best interest of those  
15 we serve. I hope the ultimate resolution of this  
16 manner honors that partnership to further our  
17 mission of service.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

20 The Board would like to call Erica  
21 Stollard to the stand at this time.

22 MS. STOLLARD: E-r-i-c-a.  
23 S-t-o-l-l-a-r-d.

24 Good afternoon. I am Erica Stollard,



1 Director of Planning and Business Development at  
2 Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center in Mattoon,  
3 Illinois.

4 My remarks summarize the written  
5 testimony that I am submitting today.

6 Sarah Bush Lincoln has submitted a CON  
7 application to construct a medical office building  
8 in Effingham, Illinois, which will replace our  
9 outdated medical office building and house existing  
10 services that we currently provide in Effingham.

11 We respectfully request that the Illinois  
12 Health Facilities and Services Review Board approve  
13 the project for the following reasons:

14 First, the application has documented the  
15 need for the project as required by the Illinois  
16 Certificate of Need, CON, rules. The current  
17 medical office building is undersized and  
18 dilapidated. It was built 50 years ago as a skating  
19 rink. Dr. Peter Bonutti converted the space into a  
20 medical office building several years ago. The  
21 current volume warrants the 65,400-square-foot,  
22 two-story medical office building. The replacement  
23 building will be constructed just east of our  
24 current existing building and the current medical

1 office building will be demolished upon occupancy of  
2 that new building. The application clearly  
3 documents the project does not include unfinished or  
4 shell space. All space is designated for medical  
5 office use. And the floor plans that we submitted  
6 with our application are actually here on display  
7 for you today, if you would like to take a look.

8 Sarah Bush Lincoln meets the Illinois  
9 state standards for the size of the project. Sarah  
10 Bush Lincoln conducted 40,143 office visits in  
11 Effingham-based practices in fiscal year '20,  
12 showing a 5 percent growth. SBL projects a 7  
13 percent growth each year for the next three years.

14 Sarah Bush Lincoln also meets the  
15 Illinois state standards for utilization of the  
16 project for CT, ultrasound, and MRI services. The  
17 project meets the state standards for two x-ray  
18 machines, which will be placed on the second floor  
19 in the orthopedic clinic. A third x-ray machine is  
20 being requested for this project, which will be  
21 located on the first floor in the walk-in clinic.  
22 This will allow for walk-in clinic patients to  
23 receive access to x-ray images without disrupting  
24 care in the orthopedic clinic.

1           Because there are no specific state  
2     utilization standards for patient exam rooms,  
3     procedure rooms, laboratory procedures, and  
4     rehabilitation services, the size of those areas  
5     were determined based on review of historical  
6     volumes and future projected demand.

7           All services, with the exception of CT,  
8     are currently provided in the Effingham Planning  
9     Area. Again, all services, with the exception of  
10    CT, are currently provided in the Effingham Planning  
11    Area. The CT imaging is necessary and will be  
12    primarily used in conjunction with the MAKO robotic  
13    arm for hip and knee joint replacement. The  
14    application has clearly documented that the addition  
15    of CT will not negatively impact HSHS St. Anthony's  
16    Hospital. Based on the most recent data available  
17    in the Illinois Hospital Profile Report, HSHS St.  
18    Anthony will continue to operate at a capacity of  
19    94.8 percent for CT scan services.

20           Also, the project clearly meets the  
21    financial viability criterion and is documented in  
22    this application. Sarah Bush Lincoln has an A+ bond  
23    rating from Standard and Poor's.

24           Lastly, I would like to draw your

1 attention to the thousands of individuals who are  
2 supporting this project. The press release  
3 announcing the project, the editorial from the  
4 Effingham Daily News supporting our project, and  
5 other media interviews have generated hundreds of  
6 social media comments in support of this project.  
7 Additionally, 301 Effingham residents have signed a  
8 petition supporting the project. 1,074 employees  
9 from Sarah Bush Lincoln have submitted letters of  
10 support. And more than 100 respected business  
11 leaders and community members from Effingham and the  
12 surrounding communities have submitted letters of  
13 support for this project. Attached to my testimony,  
14 I am submitting the media coverage, petitions, and  
15 social media comments related to this project so  
16 that you may directly review the incredible support  
17 and enthusiasm we have received to replace our  
18 medical office building.

19 Thank you for the opportunity to present  
20 my testimony today. I strongly encourage you to  
21 approve Effingham Medical Office Building Project  
22 20-030.

23 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

24 Next, I would like to call Julie Goebel

1 to the stand.

2 MS. GOEBEL: Julie, J-u-l-i-e; Goebel,  
3 G-o-e-b-e-l.

4 Hi, my name is Julie Goebel. I am Vice  
5 President of Strategy for the Illinois Division of  
6 Hospital Sisters Health System.

7 Thank you, Mr. Roate and Mr. Constantino,  
8 for accommodating our public hearing request and  
9 providing this opportunity today.

10 We hope everyone understands that HSHS  
11 does not oppose the modernization of existing  
12 facilities. We have stated that repeatedly and  
13 affirm it again today. What we oppose is the  
14 unnecessary duplication of services, the costly  
15 over-expansion of facilities, and the creation of  
16 excess capacity in violation of the Review Board's  
17 regulations. This project violates those  
18 regulations in material ways and it is to that  
19 extent that we oppose it.

20 The permit application contained  
21 conflicting information as to the scope of this  
22 project and its compliance with applicable rules.  
23 After we made an initial inquiry about this, the  
24 applicant finally acknowledged just this week that,

1 yes, indeed, they did not follow the Board's rules  
2 and they had omitted important information from the  
3 permit application.

4 They provided some new information, but  
5 it still conflicts with other responses or other  
6 representations they have made. And it still does  
7 not fully comply with the Review Board's rules.

8 They have not complied with the basic  
9 requirement of providing physician referral letters  
10 to show where the patients for the proposed services  
11 are coming from, and that the project will not  
12 adversely impact existing providers. The applicant  
13 now concedes that it did not provide the required  
14 referral letters. Although the applicant recently  
15 submitted some referral letters, it is not done so  
16 with respect to all required services. In addition,  
17 the submitted referral letters are incomplete, as  
18 they do not attest to where the historical  
19 procedures were performed and how many patients will  
20 be referred from each existing facility.

21 Their information is still incomplete and  
22 it still does not allow for a full assessment of the  
23 impact of this project. But the information they  
24 have provided shows that the project is likely to

1 have a large adverse impact on St. Anthony's.

2 For example, the applicant only has  
3 enough patient volume of its own to operate the  
4 ultrasound equipment at 11 percent capacity. No one  
5 buys expensive medical equipment with the  
6 expectation it will hardly ever be used, which is  
7 what this application seems to suggest. They need  
8 to operate this equipment at a much higher capacity  
9 to make it viable. Since they cannot do so with  
10 their own patient volume, we can only assume they  
11 will seek to obtain this volume from St. Anthony's.  
12 They will need close to 3,000 patient visits that  
13 they do not currently have to operate the ultrasound  
14 to full capacity.

15 They want a CT scanner that they say will  
16 operate at less than 15 percent capacity. That is  
17 not a viable level of operation. Their new  
18 information admits that they are already planning to  
19 take volume away from St. Anthony's for the CT  
20 scanner. They will need over 6,000 patient visits  
21 that they do not currently have to operate the CT  
22 scanner at full capacity.

23 They want three x-ray machines, even  
24 though they barely justify one with their own

1 patient volume. They will need almost 15,000 x-ray  
2 procedures that they do not currently have to  
3 operate the x-ray machines at full capacity.

4 This is not a project designed to merely  
5 update old facilities and equipment. This is a  
6 highly aggressive expansion of services that  
7 requires substantial numbers of St. Anthony's  
8 patients to become financially viable. And to the  
9 extent this gamble pays off for them, it will  
10 severely impair the financial viability of St.  
11 Anthony's.

12 The Review Board's regulations and  
13 policies are intended to preserve the financial  
14 viability of existing providers within a community.  
15 This project is not in compliance with those  
16 regulations and should be denied as submitted.

17 Thank you.

18 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

19 Next, I would like to call Senator Dale  
20 Righter to the stand.

21 SENATOR RIGHTER: Dale, D-a-l-e; last  
22 name Righter, R-i-g-h-t-e-r.

23 Thank you. My name is Dale Righter. I  
24 am a State Senator from the 55th District. My



1 comments here today will closely track the  
2 correspondence that I have provided to the Board.

3 As the State Senator from the 55th  
4 District, my area of representation and my area of  
5 concern includes both Effingham and Coles Counties.

6 My interest here today is two-fold:  
7 First, to see that an accurate, fact-based  
8 discussion of the application and its potential  
9 impact takes precedence. Second, I am an advocate  
10 for the overall advancement of this region, both in  
11 terms of financial investment and patient care.

12 As you are aware, the application before  
13 you contemplates the construction of a replacement  
14 medical facility which represents an approximately  
15 \$35 million investment in the City of Effingham for  
16 purposes of housing, with one small exception,  
17 services already being provided by the Sarah Bush  
18 Lincoln Bonutti Clinic. Currently, the clinic's  
19 services are housed in several facilities throughout  
20 the City of Effingham. The new facility will allow  
21 for consolidation of several services under one  
22 roof. The benefit to the patients who choose to  
23 seek services at the clinic is both clear and  
24 substantial.

1           The sole exception referenced above is  
2   the addition of a single CT scan machine. According  
3   to the submitted materials and other available  
4   information, St. Anthony's Hospital in Effingham,  
5   which is a facility owned by the HSHS system based  
6   in Springfield, performs approximately 13,600 CT  
7   scans per year. The addition of a single CT scan  
8   machine at the clinic will benefit the patients and  
9   will result in approximately 300 scans currently  
10  being performed at the HSHS facility in Effingham  
11  instead being provided by the clinic. As a  
12  percentage, that would constitute a mere 2 percent  
13  of those scans.

14           Critical to the evaluation of this  
15  application, as with all such applications, is the  
16  willingness to ensure that public comments regarding  
17  the potential impact of any project be verified by  
18  and comport with the application itself. And I want  
19  to emphasize by the application itself and not by  
20  strained attempts to justify opposition.

21           On that note, claims have been made that  
22  the St. Anthony's HSHS facility will lose over \$30  
23  million in revenue as a result of the project at  
24  issue. But from my review of the application and

1 other materials available, there is no evidence to  
2 support such a claim. Any significant revenue loss  
3 to St. Anthony's which results from the clinic's  
4 operations is occurring already today. Construction  
5 of a new replacement facility will not change that  
6 fact. In fact, in my 23 years in the legislature  
7 and of all of the Certificate of Need processes in  
8 which I have been involved or which I have  
9 monitored, I'm not sure I have ever seen a more  
10 blatant or transparent effort to mislead members of  
11 the Board or members of the community about the  
12 impact of the application itself.

13 As I noted at the top of this  
14 correspondence, my interest in this issue is driven  
15 by a desire to see the discussion and consideration  
16 of this application be driven by the contents and  
17 predictable impacts of the actual project under  
18 consideration and the advancement of the region as a  
19 whole. The proposed medical office building, in  
20 bringing the services already being provided by the  
21 Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic under one roof and  
22 investing \$35 million in new construction in  
23 Effingham, is certainly an advancement both  
24 financially and in terms of patient care.

1                   As such, I respectfully urge the Board to  
2   approve the application.

3                   Thank you.

4                   MR. ROATE: Thank you.

5                   Next, I would like to call Dr. Ruben  
6   Boyajian.

7                   DR. BOYAJIAN: Thank you. R-u-b-e-n,  
8   B-o-y-a-j-i-a-n.

9                   Good afternoon. Mr. Constantino and  
10   Mr. Roate, I appreciate you hearing my concerns  
11   today.

12                  My name is Dr. Ruben Boyajian. I  
13   specialize in general surgery. I am currently in  
14   active practice. I am also serving as the medical  
15   director of Women's Wellness Center and Cancer  
16   Services at St. Anthony's Hospital in the community.

17                  I am an independent physician, meaning  
18   that I'm not affiliated with either the CON  
19   applicant or the affected hospital.

20                  In addition to being free of direct  
21   financial ties to either the applicant or St.  
22   Anthony's Memorial Hospital, my tenure as a surgeon  
23   in Effingham dates back well before the CON  
24   applicant first came to town. I came to Effingham

1 moonlighting in the emergency room an average of one  
2 weekend a month while I was proudly serving as a  
3 Major in the United States Air Force, a voluntary  
4 service. I was attracted to the community by the  
5 caliber of the hospital and the perception -- and  
6 exceptional community and unusually level of  
7 sophistication for a rural community of the source.

8           After more than 40 years practicing my  
9 specialty in Effingham, I believe I understand the  
10 community and its health care needs. I make no  
11 apology for advocating for my home hospital and  
12 community.

13           I respectfully oppose Project 20-030 as  
14 submitted. An appropriately-sized replacement  
15 building that does not duplicate existing health  
16 services would enjoy my unqualified support. In its  
17 current form, Project 20-030 will inevitably lead to  
18 service cuts and job losses at our Sole Community  
19 Hospital. The net effect will be negative for the  
20 Effingham area.

21           Collaboration has always been a  
22 cornerstone of effective rural health care. Unlike  
23 urban environments with multiple hospitals and other  
24 providers, rural America is a zero-sum game.

1                   In areas of static or declining  
2   population, like Effingham, the gains of one  
3   provider only come at the expense of another.

4                   Collaboration and education of our future  
5   physicians and health occupation colleagues is also  
6   work done at St. Anthony's with the assistance of  
7   community physicians. This investment is building  
8   the future of health care for the communities we  
9   serve.

10                  When the physician group affiliated with  
11   this application first arrived some 20 years ago,  
12   St. Anthony's could not have been more supportive.  
13   The hospital gave these doctors an entire floor and  
14   exclusive use of expensive and sophisticated  
15   equipment. These physicians thrived in Effingham in  
16   large measure because of the support they received  
17   from St. Anthony's.

18                  A few short years ago, the applicant  
19   itself showed up in town and the support and  
20   collaboration by St. Anthony's continued unabated.  
21   Physicians associated with the applicant enjoyed  
22   privileges, space and access to equipment at the  
23   hospital. St. Anthony's has recruited doctors now  
24   affiliated with the applicant. Collaboration

1 through the Physician Certified Integrated Network  
2 has led to consistency of practice, quality, cost  
3 containment, and resource utilization.

4 Perhaps a hallmark of this recent  
5 collaboration was St. Anthony's becoming one of just  
6 two hospitals in Illinois to earn the Joint  
7 Commission of Gold Seal of Approval for Advanced  
8 Total Hip and Knee Replacement Certification.

9 Collaboration in rural health care, and  
10 specifically in Effingham, is needed now more than  
11 ever. The COVID-19 pandemic has financially  
12 challenged all Illinois hospitals and produced  
13 necessary layoffs at St. Anthony's, especially now.  
14 It makes little sense to allow this unnecessary  
15 duplication and expansion of existing hospital  
16 services.

17 I truly hope the staff and members of the  
18 Review Board will find a way to the win-win solution  
19 that this community both wants, needs and deserves.  
20 First step in getting there would be more complete  
21 information on this application.

22 I would really like to thank you for the  
23 opportunity provided to express my opinion in this  
24 very important subject.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. ROATE: Thank you, Doctor, and thank  
3 you for your service.

4 Next, the Board would like to call  
5 Mr. Nick Williams to speak on behalf of Dr. Peter  
6 Bonutti.

7 MR. WILLIAMS: Nick, N-i-c-k; Williams,  
8 W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s.

9 Good afternoon. I am Nick Williams  
10 reading remarks prepared by Peter Bonutti,  
11 orthopedic surgeon at Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti  
12 Clinic.

13 My remarks summarize the written  
14 testimony that I am submitting today.

15 I am Peter Bonutti and it is my name on  
16 the building and the practice. I am an orthopedic  
17 surgeon and, for the past 30 years, I have done  
18 everything in my power to provide excellent and  
19 cutting-edge care to my patients. Despite offers to  
20 practice at prestigious institutions, such as  
21 Stanford, Emory and University of Florida, among  
22 others, I chose to practice in Effingham, Illinois,  
23 bringing the newest orthopedic care to my patients.  
24 Patients have traveled from 41 states and 6



1 countries to the Bonutti Clinic for their care. We  
2 see patients on a daily basis who travel hundreds of  
3 miles to our clinic. This has required us to build  
4 a multidisciplinary facility which will encompass  
5 all clinical and diagnostic services under one roof,  
6 therefore, allowing patients to have access to all  
7 services in the same day. This consolidation of  
8 services enhances not only the quality, but the cost  
9 efficiency of the patient's care.

10 Despite exclusive work for more than 25  
11 years at St. Anthony's Hospital, it became clear  
12 that St. Anthony/HSHS was not willing to adequately  
13 invest in our practice and a much needed new  
14 facility.

15 Three years ago, Jerry Esker, the Sarah  
16 Bush Lincoln President and CEO, and I talked about  
17 advancing orthopedics and the quality of care.  
18 After understanding Jerry and Sarah Bush Lincoln's  
19 commitment for improving and investing in the  
20 quality of care for our patients, not only I, but  
21 the entire group of providers and staff all chose to  
22 partner with SBL.

23 After five years of attempting to  
24 negotiate a partnership with HSHS, we realized they

1 would not make the investment in a quality facility.  
2 Instead, HSHS demanded I travel to numerous  
3 facilities up to and including the metro St. Louis  
4 area and provide orthopedic and surgical care there,  
5 rather than keeping it in our Effingham community.  
6 This would have meant spending a substantial amount  
7 of time and business outside of the Effingham area,  
8 such as Breeze, Greenville and O'Fallon. This would  
9 have taken surgeries and revenue away from  
10 Effingham.

11 Our partnership allows me to focus on  
12 patient care while continuing my research and  
13 development. We have published more than a hundred  
14 papers, have more than 400 patents, and in excess of  
15 700 licenses for medical products. This allows me  
16 to continue to bring cutting-edge technology to  
17 Central Illinois. I share this information simply  
18 because the accumulation of clinical practice,  
19 clinical research and medical product development  
20 has brought Effingham both national and  
21 international notoriety.

22 Both Sarah Bush Lincoln's reinvestment in  
23 the local community is what earned my trust and  
24 convinced me to partner with it three years ago.

1 With the substantial investment Sarah Bush Lincoln  
2 is making in this new facility, it has shown 100  
3 percent reinvestment in the local community. This  
4 is essential for providing quality of care and will  
5 serve our community decades to come. My partners,  
6 to this date, still cover ER orthopedic call at HSHS  
7 St. Anthony's Hospital, which is a valuable service  
8 to the community.

9 Sarah Bush Lincoln focuses on quality and  
10 safety for its patients. It is the recipient of the  
11 Top Rural Hospital, and a grade of A from the  
12 Leapfrog Group, a nationally recognized group that  
13 measures quality and safety. These recognitions  
14 placed Sarah Bush Lincoln in the top 6 percent of  
15 the hospitals nationwide.

16 Community members have embraced us by  
17 giving us many awards throughout the years. This  
18 year, I was presented the Vocational Excellence  
19 Award from the Effingham Noon Rotary group by the  
20 former mayor of Effingham, Mr. Jeff Bloemker.  
21 Therefore, showing the Effingham community continues  
22 to support us and has always trusted us with their  
23 care.

24 During my 30 years of contributing to the

1 local economy, by attracting patients from around  
2 the United States and employing approximately 200  
3 individuals at the clinic and research facility,  
4 attracting CEOs and corporate executives to  
5 Effingham to evaluate and license technology, I have  
6 never asked, nor have received, any financial  
7 incentives from the city. Sarah Bush is providing  
8 all capital to build a first-rate medical building.

9 Even HSHS agrees the Bonutti Clinic needs  
10 to be replaced. Our current structure is 50+ years  
11 old and that is not able to accommodate growth.  
12 This Certificate of Need application spells out  
13 specifically why the space is needed and how it will  
14 be used.

15 The clinic we are asking to build is a  
16 high quality building that will combine several  
17 medical practices into one location and streamline  
18 services and create efficiencies and comfort for all  
19 of our patients. It is amazing that Sarah Bush is  
20 willing to invest \$35 million into a  
21 state-of-the-art building for our community. This  
22 new facility is its long-term commitment to  
23 providing jobs and quality of care in the Effingham  
24 community.

1 Sarah Bush Lincoln is a dedicated  
2 organization with the largest orthopedic group in  
3 downstate Illinois that provides specialty services  
4 not available through HSHS St. Anthony. The  
5 subspecialists at Sarah Bush Lincoln will be using  
6 this facility to provide care. Sarah Bush Lincoln  
7 continues to grow because of its commitment to  
8 reinvest in its communities and helps everyone  
9 regardless of pay or source. It is exactly why we  
10 entered medicine, to help everyone in need, not just  
11 those with insurance.

12 Please accept this letter as an  
13 indication of my wholehearted support of Effingham  
14 Medical Office Building No. 20-030. I look forward  
15 to an expedited approval of the Certificate of Need,  
16 as our aging facility is in urgent need of a new  
17 quality building to continue to provide excellent  
18 care to our patients.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

21 Next, I would like to call Dr. John  
22 Scherschel.

23 MR. CONSTANTINO: We have Dr. Scherschel  
24 online. He is now unmuted.

1 MR. ROATE: Okay. Thank you, Mike.

2 MR. SCHERSCHEL: Good afternoon. John,  
3 J-o-h-n, Scherschel, S-c-h-e-r-s-c-h-e-l.

4 Good afternoon and thank you for allowing  
5 me to provide comment on this public hearing  
6 regarding this CON application.

7 My name is Dr. John Scherschel. I am an  
8 electrophysiologist and President of Prairie  
9 Cardiovascular. Prairie is a 72-physician  
10 cardiovascular specialty practice which includes  
11 cardiology, vascular medicine, electrophysiology,  
12 and vascular surgeons serving patients across  
13 central and southern Illinois. We have a full-time  
14 location within the Prairie Heart Institute at  
15 St. Anthony's Hospital in Effingham, Illinois. We  
16 are affiliated with the Hospital Sisters Health  
17 System.

18 My remarks are in respectful opposition  
19 to CON Project 20-030. An appropriately sized  
20 replacement building that does not duplicate  
21 hospital services merits approval, but not this  
22 application as it is submitted.

23 Prairie Cardiovascular has served the  
24 Effingham community for more than 30 years. We are

1 deeply concerned over the duplication of  
2 higher-margin outpatient services represented here,  
3 which can only lead to service cuts, job losses and  
4 reduced community engagement by HSHS St. Anthony's  
5 Memorial Hospital, a federally designated Sole  
6 Community Hospital.

7 I want to respond to public comments by  
8 the applicant's CEO, who last week said, I'm looking  
9 out my window at a brand new multimillion-dollar  
10 building that HSHS St. Anthony's just built a mile  
11 from Sarah Bush. Quite frankly, that HSHS building  
12 is not at all comparable to the one proposed in this  
13 CON application.

14 First, the new HSHS building is just  
15 one-fifth of the size of the 65,400 square foot  
16 building proposed in this project and was completed  
17 at a small fraction of the cost. More importantly  
18 is why that HSHS building came to be needed at all.  
19 After the CON applicant unilaterally terminated a  
20 long-standing, exclusive, professional services  
21 agreement with Prairie Cardiovascular, it became  
22 necessary for HSHS to construct that small building  
23 to assure that the patients of Coles County  
24 continued to have access to cardiology, vascular and

1 electrophysiology services. So again, a completely  
2 different story than the situation with this CON  
3 application. If anything, this reference to a new  
4 HSHS building impairs, not helps, the CON  
5 applicant's case. The HSHS building sought to  
6 maintain existing services to that community, while  
7 the applicant today proposes an expansion and new  
8 services. The HSHS building was so small and  
9 inexpensive that no CON was required, while the  
10 applicant today proposes a very pricey and oversized  
11 new building to support new services. The thing  
12 that they have in common, unfortunately, is that  
13 both were born out of non-collaboration by this CON  
14 applicant.

15           Our Sole Community Hospital has  
16 endeavored to be a good partner with the applicant  
17 in serving the greater Effingham area. St.  
18 Anthony's has long provided hospital privileges,  
19 space and equipment to physicians associated with  
20 the applicant and the hospital has recruited  
21 physicians to the Effingham community who now work  
22 for the applicant. St. Anthony's and the applicant  
23 collaborated to become one of only two hospitals in  
24 Illinois to earn The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of



1 Approval for Advanced Total Hip and Knee Replacement  
2 Certification. That sort of collaboration well  
3 serves patients in this rural community.

4 In closing, I sincerely believe that we  
5 can and should ultimately get to an appropriate  
6 result, but this is predicated upon the condition  
7 that our community and all stakeholders are afforded  
8 fuller and clearer information on Project 20-030.  
9 To date, the applicant has provided vague and  
10 inconsistent information about the scope and impacts  
11 of this project. Let's all work together, please,  
12 to achieve the right outcome for all concerned,  
13 especially the patients and people of greater  
14 Effingham.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. ROATE: Thank you, Doctor.

17 Next, I would like to call Scott Wilson  
18 to the stand.

19 MR. WILSON: Scott Wilson. S-c-o-t-t,  
20 W-i-l-s-o-n.

21 Good afternoon. I am Scott Wilson,  
22 Immediate Past President of Sarah Bush Lincoln  
23 Health Center Board of Directors in Mattoon,  
24 Illinois.

1                   My remarks summarize the written  
2     testimony that I am submitting today.

3                   Trust is important in life, particularly  
4     when it involves your health care. You want to  
5     trust your doctor to treat your illness  
6     appropriately and to trust the staff that will take  
7     care of you. Your trust -- you trust that your  
8     health information remains confidential.

9                   Sarah Bush Lincoln's leadership has  
10    earned the community's trust through its words that  
11    are supported by its actions. This hospital is  
12    deeply committed to creating access to care for its  
13    community. Recently, replacement plans were  
14    unveiled for an aging medical office building in  
15    Effingham, the Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic. I  
16    support the Effingham Medical Office Building No.  
17    20-030. As the immediate past chairperson of the  
18    Sarah Bush Lincoln Board of Directors, I assure you  
19    that it is just a replacement building. It is large  
20    enough to accommodate 17 medical staff members and 6  
21    busy practices, as well as their ancillary services.

22                  I can also assure you that there was  
23    never discussion, a mention, or a thought that Sarah  
24    Bush Lincoln would convert the new medical office

1 building into a micro-hospital or a surgery center,  
2 as some have suggested. The building is not  
3 appropriately defined to accommodate surgical  
4 procedures and the Illinois Department of Public  
5 Health would never approve the building designed for  
6 this use. I am well-acquainted with many of the  
7 Sarah Bush Lincoln leaders and I can say without  
8 reservation that their word is their bond. They are  
9 the epitome of integrity and is the foundation of  
10 their decision making.

11 Our board is a steward of the  
12 organization. Over the years, I have come to  
13 appreciate the complexity of health care. I have  
14 witnessed fellow board members wrestle with tough  
15 decisions at every turn. Should we enter a new  
16 service line? Should we build a new facility?  
17 Should we partner with another organization?

18 Sarah Bush Lincoln has a long history of  
19 making thoughtful decisions because its staff  
20 members mine data, develop long-term projections and  
21 make fact-based decisions that serve the  
22 community-at-large quite well. SBL does this to  
23 achieve its mission, which is to provide excellent  
24 care for all and create healthy communities. This

1 means that no one is ever turned away for an  
2 inability to pay.

3 At 43 years old, Sarah Bush Lincoln is a  
4 financially strong organization with an A+ rating  
5 from S & P Global Ratings and is ranked in the top 6  
6 percent of hospitals in the nation for quality and  
7 safety. It has earned the designation of Top Rural  
8 Hospital by the Leapfrog Group. Sarah Bush Lincoln  
9 is a trusted source of care in the region destined  
10 for an even greater impact.

11 I urge you to approve the Certificate of  
12 Need for the Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic  
13 Effingham Medical Office Building No. 20-030.

14 Thank you for your time.

15 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

16 Next, the Board will accept testimony  
17 from Dr. Andrew Mahtani.

18 MR. CONSTANTINO: We have Dr. Mahtani  
19 online.

20 DR. MAHTANI: Yes.

21 MR. ROATE: Thank you, Doctor. You may  
22 begin.

23 DR. MAHTANI: I am Dr. Andrew Mahtani. I  
24 serve the Effingham community as a hospitalist. For

1 those unfamiliar with the term, that means I am a  
2 dedicated inpatient physician who works exclusively  
3 in a hospital. Specifically, for me, that is  
4 St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital, an officially  
5 designated Sole Community Hospital in Effingham.

6 I appreciate the Review Board staff for  
7 coming here today. I respectfully appear in  
8 opposition to Project No. 20-030 as proposed.

9 It may be that, in other times, Illinois  
10 officials could be less vigilant in safeguarding  
11 against unnecessary duplication of existing hospital  
12 services. If so, that should no longer be the case,  
13 given the enormous financial and operational  
14 challenges to all hospitals from this ongoing  
15 COVID-19 pandemic. No category of hospital has been  
16 more profoundly harmed than rural hospitals. Their  
17 always delicate financial conditions have been  
18 strained in an unprecedented manner.

19 St. Anthony's has been responding to this  
20 pandemic since March. Among other things, the  
21 hospital prepared a COVID unit, conserved personal  
22 protective equipment, and followed CDC guidelines,  
23 Executive Orders of the Governor and IDPH guidance  
24 to close non-emergency services. St. Anthony's

1 followed state orders and prepared for an influx of  
2 COVID patients that never came. The loss of revenue  
3 from curtailed elective procedures was never offset  
4 by COVID-related patient volume.

5 All the while, our Sole Community  
6 Hospital continued to make its essential services  
7 and resources available, even as usage declined.  
8 Federal CARES Act funds helped somewhat, but they  
9 didn't come close to making St. Anthony's whole for  
10 its COVID losses. Hospital layoffs became  
11 necessary.

12 While the hospital has gradually seen an  
13 improvement in patient volumes and revenue, they  
14 remain well below pre-COVID numbers.

15 Fully 75.9 percent of St. Anthony's  
16 revenue comes from outpatient procedures of the sort  
17 that are duplicated in this CON application. That  
18 revenue must cross-subsidize essential services,  
19 including the emergency room, respiratory therapy,  
20 obstetrics, emergency surgery, and post-operative  
21 care and intensive care units. I am deeply  
22 concerned that Project No. 20-030 will threaten our  
23 Sole Community Hospital's ability to sustain these  
24 essential services.

1           I sincerely hope that the Review Board  
2     will be especially vigilant during this pandemic in  
3     safeguarding against the unnecessary duplication of  
4     existing and currently underutilized hospital  
5     services. The incomplete, vague and inconsistent  
6     information provided thus far by the CON applicant  
7     is not fully fair to the Effingham community. I  
8     hope the Review Board will insist on fuller and  
9     clearer documentation and ultimately approve an  
10    appropriate win-win solution, a right-sized  
11    replacement building without duplicated services.

12           Thank you for your time.

13           MR. ROATE: Thank you.

14           Next, the Board would like to ask Doug  
15    Wholtman to approach the stand.

16           MR. WOHLTMAN: Doug Wohltman, D-o-u-g,  
17    W-o-h-l-t-m-a-n.

18           Good afternoon. I am Doug Wohltman of  
19    Wohltman Construction of Effingham, Illinois.

20           My remarks today will summarize the  
21    written testimony that I am submitting today.

22           As an Effingham business owner and  
23    resident, I am writing in support of the newly  
24    proposed Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic, which is

1 Effingham Medical Office Building No. 20-030.

2 I was very surprised to learn that HSHS  
3 St. Anthony Hospital had filed an objection to this  
4 \$35 million project. St. Anthony and HSHS have been  
5 right-sizing their organization for some time. In a  
6 community of 12,000 people, the loss of 100-plus  
7 jobs hurts. We have seen this directly with family  
8 members of our employees. It also hurts the local  
9 auto dealers, the furniture stores, the restaurants,  
10 and retail establishments. Without a doubt, we need  
11 Sarah Bush Lincoln, its facilities and its  
12 investment into our community.

13 This replacement building represents  
14 positive growth for this entrepreneurial community,  
15 one that I am very proud to be a part of. Besides  
16 the significant amount of construction jobs that  
17 this project will bring to Effingham during the  
18 18-month build process, the project will create a  
19 considerable amount of trickle-down jobs in the  
20 community. A building of this caliber along I-70  
21 will most definitely be a welcome addition to the  
22 landscape and create a wow impression to those  
23 taking exit 160 into Effingham.

24 This is a time for all Effingham



1 businesses to focus on the community at large and  
2 move forward with a growth mindset.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to speak  
4 today. I urge you to approve the Effingham Medical  
5 Office Building No. 20-030.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

8 Next, may I call Meghan Rewers to the  
9 stand.

10 MS. REWERS: Meghan, M-e-g-h-a-n. Last  
11 name is Rewers, R-e-w-e-r-s.

12 Good afternoon. My name is Meghan  
13 Rewers. I serve as the Executive Director of Crisis  
14 Nursery of Effingham County. I appear before you as  
15 an opponent to the CON Project No. 20-030 in its  
16 current form.

17 Ours is just one of many community  
18 organizations in Effingham that exist largely due to  
19 the support of St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital. We  
20 provide protection from and prevention of childhood  
21 trauma, abuse and neglect through 24-hour emergency  
22 shelter care. At Crisis Nursery, there are no  
23 income or demographic guidelines. Our services are  
24 free and open to any family or child in need. We

1 help children birth to age 6. Over the last three  
2 years, Crisis Nursery has provided more than 500  
3 children with more than 20,000 collective hours of  
4 emergency childcare services.

5 St. Anthony's provided the seed money for  
6 the development of Crisis Nursery and remains our  
7 most significant source of financial and operational  
8 support. It is no exaggeration to say that, but for  
9 St. Anthony's, Crisis Nursery would not exist.

10 The continued existence of many other  
11 community organizations in Effingham largely depends  
12 on St. Anthony's. There is no question that our  
13 rural community is better for it.

14 No new patients or doctors are envisioned  
15 by this CON application. Only a redirection of  
16 outpatient volume away from a federally designated  
17 Sole Community Hospital that already operates below  
18 the statute utilization standards. By shifting  
19 revenue out of St. Anthony's, Project No. 20-030  
20 will leave our rural hospital with fewer resources  
21 to engage in the important community support upon  
22 which the Effingham community has come to rely.

23 Nobody objects to a similarly-sized  
24 replacement medical office building that does not

1 duplicate existing hospital services. It's the  
2 scope and the scale, not the basic concept, that is  
3 a problem. A win-win solution for everyone should  
4 be possible. To get there, I do believe the  
5 applicant should give everyone more information, not  
6 the incomplete and inconsistent documentation  
7 submitted thus far. Our community simply cannot  
8 afford to get this wrong.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

11 Next, may I call Tom Grunloh to the  
12 stand.

13 MR. GRUNLOH: Tom, T-o-m; Grunloh,  
14 G-r-u-n-l-o-h.

15 Good afternoon. My name is Tom Grunloh.  
16 I am the President of Grunloh Construction here in  
17 Effingham.

18 I would like to preface my remarks first  
19 to say that we do work for every health facility in  
20 the local and regional area. So my remarks today  
21 should be taken as a pro-Effingham remark. So --

22 My remarks summarize the written  
23 testimony that I am submitting today.

24 As the owner of a local construction

1 company, I am pleased to welcome the proposed Sarah  
2 Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic, the Effingham Medical  
3 Office Building 20-030 in Effingham.

4 My company has been involved with many  
5 large projects, so I know firsthand the immediate  
6 impact this will have on our community. The math is  
7 pretty simple. Every construction job creates 1.6  
8 downstream jobs. For the Sarah Bush Lincoln Bonutti  
9 Clinic, that translates to 160 new jobs in our  
10 community of 12,339 people. Sarah Bush Lincoln has  
11 a history of doing business with local companies  
12 whenever possible and I am certain this is -- the  
13 project will be no different.

14 I know some have concerns about  
15 competition and saturation. I am here to tell you  
16 that competition is good for a community. I see it  
17 every day in my line of work. It creates efficiency  
18 and excellence. It makes products better. It makes  
19 services better. It makes companies better.  
20 Competition is good.

21 Sarah Bush Lincoln has shown itself to be  
22 a true community partner in so many ways for  
23 decades. A program that is particularly important  
24 to me and to which I have made substantial donation

1 is the Sarah Bush Lincoln Dental Services. It  
2 provides necessary dental care to children on the  
3 state-of-the-art bus that visits throughout the  
4 region, including Effingham. Kids get their care  
5 they need and get back to school free of pain and  
6 worry.

7 I support Sarah Bush Lincoln programs,  
8 like Sarah Bush Lincoln Dental Services, because  
9 Sarah Bush Lincoln supports the community. I  
10 strongly encourage you to approve the Effingham  
11 Medical Office Building 20-030. We need this  
12 project, these jobs, and this state-of-the-art  
13 medical center in Effingham.

14 Thank you very much.

15 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

16 Next, I would like to call Sister Carol  
17 Beckermann to the stand.

18 SISTER BECKERMANN: Sister Carol,  
19 C-a-r-o-l, Beckermann, B-e-c-k-e-r-m-a-n-n.

20 Good afternoon. I am Sister Carol  
21 Beckermann, a Franciscan Sister of Our Lady of  
22 Perpetual Help, and I serve as area director for  
23 Effingham Catholic Charities.

24 I respectfully oppose the CON application

1 as submitted. If the applicant refiles this project  
2 to avoid duplicating existing services at HSHS St.  
3 Anthony Memorial Hospital, a non-profit, federally  
4 designated Sole Community Hospital, my concerns  
5 would be addressed.

6 As with virtually every significant civic  
7 and charitable organization in our region, Effingham  
8 Catholic Charities has enjoyed a long, significant  
9 and necessary support from St. Anthony's. That  
10 support takes many forms, including medical  
11 prescription assistance, predominantly in the form  
12 of emergency medication co-pays, free or greatly  
13 reduced diabetic medications and nutrition  
14 counseling, vouchers for uninsured dental needs,  
15 donations to our pantry's wellness food bags,  
16 including special foods for those with people who  
17 suffer from diabetes and/or heart disease. And a  
18 gallon of milk each month for each of our pantry  
19 clients.

20 Duplicating services and redirecting  
21 patient volumes and revenue away from our Sole  
22 Community Hospital, Project No. 20-030 will put at  
23 risk St. Anthony's continuing support for the work  
24 of Effingham Catholic Charities and many other civic

1 and charitable organizations. Hospital service cuts  
2 and job losses are also a real and inevitable  
3 possibility.

4 I sincerely believe that our community  
5 would benefit from a clearer and more consistent  
6 information regarding Project No. 20-030. Perhaps  
7 in an effort to simplify things for an audience  
8 unfamiliar with hospital operations and finances,  
9 the applicant has left out important details when  
10 describing this project to the public. For example,  
11 the applicant took out newspaper ads soliciting  
12 letters of support for Project 0 -- No. 0 --  
13 sorry -- Project No. 20-030, describing it as simply  
14 a modernization. Earlier press releases and press  
15 statements, likewise, failed to mention the new  
16 services. Even in the application itself, the new  
17 services were not accompanied by traditional  
18 demonstration of need and documented impacts on  
19 existing providers. As with anything, details  
20 matter.

21 A mere modernization and replacement of  
22 an existing medical office building would not raise  
23 the concerns present in Project No. 20-030. I hope  
24 the Review Board will deny this CON application as

1 originally submitted and ultimately approve a  
2 modernization that does not duplicate existing  
3 hospital services.

4 Thank you for your time and attention.

5 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

6 Next, the Board would like to call a Amy  
7 Dammerman to the stand.

8 MS. DAMMERMAN: Amy, A-m-y, Dammerman,  
9 D-a-m-m-e-r-m-a-n.

10 Good afternoon. I am Amy Dammerman,  
11 Clinic Director of the Sarah Bush Lincoln Clinic in  
12 Effingham, Illinois.

13 My remarks summarize the written  
14 testimony that I am submitting today.

15 I am supporting the Sarah Bush Lincoln  
16 Bonutti Clinic Effingham Medical Office Building No.  
17 20-030 because Sarah Bush Lincoln continues to  
18 invest in Effingham, my hometown.

19 I am the clinic director of the Sarah  
20 Bush Lincoln Bonutti Clinic. I manage the  
21 day-to-day operations of the busy clinic, solve  
22 issues, hire staff, and address the needs of the  
23 medical team. Before I talk about why this critical  
24 project for Effingham, I want to talk about the



1 investment Sarah Bush Lincoln has made in Effingham.

2 To date, my organization has invested  
3 nearly 13 million in new buildings and land  
4 acquisitions in the last 12 years. I am not even  
5 telling the cost of equipment in various buildings.

6 The Effingham Medical Building is an  
7 important replacement project. The roof leaks, the  
8 HVAC system is inefficient, it floods during heavy  
9 rains, there are issues with the automatic doors,  
10 the MRI unit is currently positioned outside of our  
11 building, it is poorly designed and floors are  
12 uneven where additions to the building were added.  
13 Despite all of these failings, the underlying issue  
14 is space. We have 14 medical staff members  
15 providing care in crowded, cramped exam rooms. It  
16 is not ideal and certainly not comfortable for  
17 patients and employees. I participated in the new  
18 design and can guarantee that there is no shell  
19 space for later developments. There will be no  
20 surgeries performed in this building. It is not  
21 even part of the application. The noted procedural  
22 rooms for the treatments -- are for treatments like  
23 our joint injections and suture removals. Every  
24 square inch of this 65,000 square foot building is

1 designed for use.

2 The medical and clinical staff is beloved  
3 by their patients. The community has embraced Sarah  
4 Bush Lincoln in this 35 million investment in  
5 Effingham. It allows us to consolidate services of  
6 our existing busy Effingham practice. We employ  
7 more than 100 local and area residents in this  
8 building and 345 Effingham County residents  
9 throughout our health system. These well-paying  
10 jobs impact the community and help keep the economy  
11 moving.

12 Some people have claimed we are offering  
13 redundant services. This is not true. In fact,  
14 throughout the pandemic, the SBL walk-in clinic  
15 currently operating in Effingham remained open and  
16 provided care for many people who needed care  
17 quickly, while HSHS St. Anthony Convenient Care  
18 shuttered during the pandemic and reopened this past  
19 week. We were glad to be available to serve the  
20 community. We continue to provide COVID-19 specimen  
21 collection and testing to all community members.

22 In HSHS St. Anthony's President and CEO  
23 Theresa Rutherford's radio interview recently, she  
24 talked about how HSHS has right-sized its

1 organization and asked local business to hire those  
2 that they let go. Sarah Bush Lincoln has offered  
3 positions to several of these people with valuable  
4 health care knowledge and expertise.

5 If this CON is approved, we start  
6 building right away and infuse money back into the  
7 economy. If this is not approved, we will continue  
8 to provide the same world-class care we always have  
9 in the deteriorating and undersized building. In  
10 the entrepreneurial community, I cannot believe that  
11 is what they would want.

12 I strongly urge you to approve the  
13 Certificate of Need for the Effingham Medical  
14 Building No. 20-030. Thank you.

15 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

16 Next, the Board would like to call John  
17 Kingery to the stand.

18 MR. KINGERY: John, J-o-h-n, Kingery,  
19 K-i-n-g-e-r-y.

20 Good afternoon and thank you to the  
21 Review Board staff for being here today.

22 I speak in opposition to the CON Project  
23 20-030 as currently proposed.

24 My name is John Kingery. I am the

1 founder of one of Effingham's largest employers,  
2 Kingery Printing Company, and am deeply committed to  
3 and involved in my local community.

4 My wife and I started Kingery Printing 52  
5 years ago in a small rented building on the  
6 courthouse square in Effingham. Over the years, our  
7 business grew, requiring a succession of moves to  
8 ever larger spaces in Effingham. In 1984, we  
9 finally built our own facility on 10 acres of land  
10 just outside of Effingham and it now spans over  
11 125,000 square feet.

12 Throughout those many years and with a  
13 deep sense of gratitude for all this community has  
14 done for our business, I have donated both time and  
15 resources to many civic and charitable organizations  
16 in and around Effingham. Years ago, I served as a  
17 volunteer board member of HSHS St. Anthony's  
18 Memorial Hospital. As a community leader, I well  
19 understand the Effingham area, the health care needs  
20 of its people, and what our Sole Community Hospital  
21 means to this community.

22 St. Anthony's is the largest employer in  
23 Effingham County. It provides all essential  
24 hospital services, including an emergency room that

1 never closes. Even when they don't pay for  
2 themselves. St. Anthony's serves everyone,  
3 including those who cannot pay for their services.  
4 St. Anthony's supports our local schools, our park  
5 district, and our police and fire departments with a  
6 wide range of medical services. Many social service  
7 organizations in the greater Effingham area are  
8 supported by St. Anthony's.

9 In short, our 144-year-old hospital is  
10 fundamentally important to virtually every aspect of  
11 life in Effingham. It is a precious asset worthy of  
12 preservation.

13 Folks around here are witnessing the  
14 harsh impacts of COVID-19 on our hospital, which led  
15 to unavoidable layoffs. The always fragile  
16 foundation of rural health care has never required  
17 more care and attention than now.

18 The proposed new services in this CON  
19 application, as well as the oversized replacement  
20 building, are simply not in the best interest of our  
21 community.

22 Please do not allow an unnecessary  
23 duplication of existing and presently underutilized  
24 hospital services. Please do not redirect patient

1 volume and revenue away from a hospital that  
2 requires those resources to support essential  
3 services, jobs and community involvement. Please  
4 right-size this project.

5 We can and should do better. A win-win  
6 solution is certainly possible and consistent with  
7 the Review Board's regulations. To that end, it  
8 would help everyone to have a complete, clear and  
9 consistent information from the applicant.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

12 Is there anyone who wishes to testify who  
13 has not had an opportunity?

14 Seeing none, is there anyone who wishes  
15 to testify or anyone who wishes to provide  
16 additional testimony?

17 Okay. I would remind everyone to submit  
18 your written comments to us so that we may have this  
19 information for the record.

20 Also, this project is scheduled for  
21 consideration by the Illinois Health Facilities and  
22 Services Review Board at its September 22, 2020  
23 meeting, which will be held at Bolingbrook Golf  
24 Club, 2001 Rodeo Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois.

1           The public has until September 2, 2020 to  
2     submit written comments. These comments can be sent  
3     to my attention at the Illinois Health Facilities  
4     and Services Review Board, care of the Illinois  
5     Department of Public Health, 525 West Jefferson  
6     Street, Second Floor, Springfield, Illinois 62761.

7           If you prefer, you may fax your comments.  
8     Our fax number is area code (217) 785-4111.

9           Are there any questions?

10          MR. CONSTANTINO: George.

11          MR. ROATE: Sir.

12          MR. CONSTANTINO: We have over 50 people  
13     connected online through Webex. Are we going to  
14     accept testimony from these online attendees?

15          MR. ROATE: I think that would be a good  
16     idea, by all means.

17          Do we have a -- do we have a roll that we  
18     can call from?

19          MR. CONSTANTINO: I have the names of  
20     most of them. Some of them are just -- did not give  
21     their names when they signed into the meeting, so we  
22     can't call on them. But I do have names of, yeah, a  
23     rather lengthy list of names. Do we want to just go  
24     down those and see if people want to testify or how

1 do you want to handle this?

2 MR. ROATE: Yes, please do. Can I ask  
3 you to call them by name?

4 MR. CONSTANTINO: Okay.

5 MR. ROATE: Thank you.

6 MR. CONSTANTINO: All right. We have an  
7 Andrea Koberlein online. Do you wish to present any  
8 testimony? Andrea Koberlein.

9 We'll move on.

10 We have Andy Watson online. Do you wish  
11 to present testimony?

12 MR. WATSON: No, I do not.

13 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

14 We have Angel DiPasquale online.

15 We have Bernie Pluard on the line. Do  
16 you wish to present testimony?

17 Hello. Is this Bernie Pluard?

18 Hello.

19 MS. PLUARD: I do not wish to.

20 MR. CONSTANTINO: Okay. Thank you.

21 We have Brad Beesley online. Did you  
22 wish to present testimony?

23 MR. BEESLEY: This is Brad Beesley. Just  
24 wanted to mention, I'm an Effingham resident and



1 also in support of the Sarah Bush Lincoln Project.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

4 I have Brian Murphy on the line. Do you  
5 want to submit testimony?

6 MR. MURPHY: I do not.

7 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

8 All right. I have Cathy Blythe online.  
9 Do you wish to submit testimony?

10 MS. BLYTHE: No, thank you.

11 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

12 We have Catie Sheehan online. Do you  
13 wish to submit testimony?

14 MS. SHEEHAN: No, I do not. Thank you.

15 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

16 We have Christine Joiner online. Do you  
17 wish to submit testimony?

18 Christene Joiner.

19 All right. I have Deanna Hunsaker  
20 online. Do you wish to submit testimony?

21 Hello, Deanna Hunsaker?

22 All right. I have a Jane Ries. Do you  
23 wish to submit testimony?

24 I have Janice Westendorf. Do you wish

1 to submit testimony? Janice Westendorf.

2 All right. Next, I have a Joe Ourth  
3 online. Do you wish to submit testimony?

4 MR. OURTH: No, I do not.

5 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

6 We have Kayla Bowling online. Do you  
7 wish to submit testimony?

8 MS. BOWLING: I do not.

9 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

10 We have Kim Rhodes online. Do you wish  
11 to submit testimony?

12 MS. RHODES: Not at this time.

13 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

14 I have Kristin Doster online. Do you  
15 wish to submit testimony to this project?

16 MS. DOSTER: I do not. Thank you.

17 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

18 All right. I have Lexie Carraway  
19 online. Do you wish to submit testimony?

20 MS. CARRAWAY: I'm an Effingham County  
21 resident and I support this project.

22 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

23 I have Mike Kasdorf online. Would you  
24 like to submit testimony? Mike Kasdorf.

1 All right. I have a Morgan Wagner on  
2 the line. Would you like to submit testimony?

3 MS. WAGNER: Yes. I am a resident of  
4 Effingham County and I support this project.

5 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

6 I have Shelby Jackson online. Would you  
7 like to submit testimony?

8 MS. JACKSON: This is Shelby Jackson. I  
9 am a resident of Cumberland County and proud Sarah  
10 Bush employee and I am in support of this project.

11 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

12 I have Steve Raymond online. Would you  
13 like to submit testimony? Steve Raymond.

14 All right. I have Tammy Weinstock  
15 online. Would you like to submit testimony?

16 MS. WEINSTOCK: Hello. Good afternoon.  
17 I am a long-time Sarah Bush employee and I fully  
18 support this project. Thank you.

19 MR. CONSTANTINO: Thank you.

20 That is the list that I have.

21 MR. ROATE: Thank you, Mike.

22 MR. CONSTANTINO: All right.

23 MR. ROATE: Okay. Question?

24 DR. STEWART: Yes, clarification. There

1 was testimony given that HSHS has never in its  
2 history opposed a CON and I believe, in 1994, when  
3 there was a surgery center that was offered, there  
4 was pretty vehement opposition by St. Anthony's and  
5 HSHS to that project. So just a clarification that  
6 I believe that was not correct.

7 MR. ROATE: Okay. Thank you.

8 Are there any further questions?

9 Seeing that there are no additional  
10 questions or comments, I deem this public hearing  
11 adjourned.

12 Thank you.

13 (Hearing adjourned at 1:26 p.m.)

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## 1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

2  
3  
4 I, JOYCE LAWRENCE, CSR# 84-1716, for  
5 the State of Illinois, do hereby certify that  
6 the hearing was reported by me in stenotype and  
7 that the transcript is a true and correct  
8 transcription of my shorthand notes of said  
9 hearing.

10 I further certify that said hearing  
11 took place at the time and place hereinabove set  
12 forth and that the taking of said hearing was  
13 commenced and completed as hereinabove set out.

14 I further certify that I am not  
15 counsel for nor in any way related to any of the  
16 parties to this suit, nor am I in any way  
17 interested in the outcome thereof.

18 



19 Joyce D. Lawrence  
20 Certified Shorthand Reporter  
21 Registered Professional Reporter  
22 State of Illinois CSR License #84-1716  
23  
24

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