



February 26, 2021

“One patient at a time.”

Ms. Debra Savage, Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
25 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

RE: OrthoIllinois Surgery Center Elgin, LLC (“OrthoIllinois”)
Project No. 20-040, Letter of Concern Regarding Safety Net Services

Dear Ms. Savage,

As a member of the Advocate Sherman Hospital Board of Directors, Member and Past President Elgin Breakfast Rotary Club for 20 years, Member of City of Elgin E-911 Board for 12 years, local small business owner and Former Lieutenant Firefighter/Paramedic Elgin Fire Department, I must share my opposition to the proposed OrthoIllinois Surgery Center Elgin. The OrthoIllinois project will severely impede the ability of Advocate Sherman to provide the essential health care services on which my community relies.

Advocate Sherman Hospital (Sherman)—a not-for-profit hospital which has served our community for more than 125 years—acts as an essential safety net to keep our community healthy.

- As a Level II Trauma Center, Sherman performs a critical function for the region, stabilizing and treating anyone that comes into its Emergency Department *regardless of their ability to pay*. It is also the only hospital in the area that delivers babies.
- In 2020, Sherman served 25,000+ Medicare patients, 20,000+ Medicaid patients, and 6,500+ uninsured patients. To that end, last year Sherman provided \$61.7 million in charity and other uncompensated care.

During this pandemic, Sherman has taken care of the region in our hour of need, with nearly 1,500 sick COVID-positive patients admitted to the hospital as February 2021. Additionally, Sherman has provided ~15,000 COVID vaccines to date. We need to acknowledge the toll the pandemic has taken not only on these individual frontline health care workers, but on the hospital itself.

Due in part to steady growth in uncompensated care over the last few years, the hospital is budgeted to operate at a substantial loss in 2021, which is unsustainable in the long-term. We need to do what we can to support this critical community safety net as they find ways to close the gap while investing in vital community-centered services, the trauma center, obstetrics care, and other essential service lines.

Orthopedic procedures are one of the highly reimbursed specialties and these procedures help cross-subsidize losses Sherman incurs from providing low and no reimbursement services. We cannot destabilize funding streams for hospitals that serve as safety nets for the region.

I appreciate your careful consideration of the impact the OrthoIllinois project and the impact on the ability of not-for-profit hospitals, such as Advocate Sherman Hospital, to provide essential services in our community.

Pat Crawford EMT-P

cc: Courtney Avery, Administrator