

ILLINOIS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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Suzanne Ness
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
66th DISTRICT

July 2, 2021

RECEIVED

JUL 07 2021

**HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD**

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 Project No. 20-040, Letter of Opposition

Dear Ms. Savage,

I write to you now as I remain profoundly concerned with the application submitted by OrthoIllinois to build an ambulatory surgical center (ASC) in Elgin, and the applicant's supplementary materials submitted for this second hearing did little to change my opposition.

The applicants have failed to provide sufficient data to support the need for additional surgical space. By the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board's own rules (Section 1100.640), 80% operating room utilization is target utilization. Pre-pandemic 2019 data shows that a number of high-quality facilities in the region are operating way below that threshold. For example, AMITA Health Saint Joseph hospital in Elgin is operating at 32% capacity, Valley ASC is operating at 37% capacity; Fox Valley ASC and additional ASCs in the area are operating at less than 60% capacity. There is no demonstrated need based on the evidence presented to me.

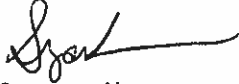
The applicants have also failed to provide firm written commitments to serve the economically underprivileged patients of my diverse district. In the last hearing, they verbally committed to "40% government pay." That was a curious way of positioning their commitment to serve my underprivileged constituents by claiming that Medicare is "government pay." Medicare reimburses quite well for orthopedic procedures. Looking at the OrthoIllinois ASC in Rockford, less than 2% of OrthoIllinois' patients are covered by Medicaid, and they serve no charity care patients at all. None.

As a small business owner myself, I understand why OrthoIllinois would want to establish a new surgery center in our vibrant community. However, we must continue to be careful as we allow

for-profit entities to enter the health care space to the potential detriment of our health care safety net, especially when their entry into the market would equate to a duplication of services and have no material benefit to the economically underprivileged.

Thank you for your intent to deny and your further consideration at the upcoming hearing. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzanne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Suzanne Ness

Illinois House of Representatives
66th House District