



April 14, 2021

***Via E-Mail***

Ms. Courtney Avery  
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board  
525 West Jefferson Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: Quincy Medical Group Hospital, Inc.; Project No. 20-044 Public Comment

Dear Ms. Avery:

I am the Chief Medical Officer for Quincy Medical Group and write this letter in response to the egregious letter penned by Dr. Joseph Gira of Eyecare Partners, submitted in opposition to this project.

First, I believe it is important that the Review Board clearly understand Dr. Gira's role in the medical community of this region. Dr. Gira is a St. Louis-based itinerant surgeon whose clinical practice, as I understand, has evolved into that of itinerant cataract surgeon whereby Dr. Gira affiliates with select local optometric practices and stretches the limits of, indications for, and guidelines governing, surgical co-management. Dr. Gira's targeted selective surgical care directly competes with community-based ophthalmologists who provide patients with unrestricted access to a full range of medical and surgical eye care, importantly including hospital inpatient and ER support. It is also my understanding that Dr. Gira owns and/or operates a free-standing surgery center in Hannibal, Missouri that competes with Quincy Medical Group's surgery center in Quincy.

I trust that, given this background, the Review Board will recognize the conflict of interest inherent in Dr. Gira's mischaracterization of the local ophthalmologists based in Quincy, Illinois. In reality, the ophthalmologists that practice within Quincy Medical Group, across the board, have earned excellent reputations throughout the community — based on the quality, scope, and convenient access to their services. I strongly believe that only organizations or individuals with a *business*-related conflict of interest would argue otherwise.

I recognize that there are pros and cons to every initiative the Review Board evaluates. The Review Board is tasked with making decisions that can truly enhance medical care in communities. As a result, I believe it is of great importance to have *accurate* facts presented by representatives on each side of the initiative. Dr. Gira's accusations are blatantly false.

Quincy Medical Group has a robust eye care team consisting of highly-skilled ophthalmologists, optometrists, and opticians who put patients first. Our eye care team has provided exceptional care to residents in the community for years.

I respectfully ask that you approve Quincy Medical Group Hospital.

Sincerely,

Richard Noble, MD  
Chief Medical Officer