

722 Eagle Trace Avenue
Quincy, IL 62305

February 8, 2021

Courtney Avery, Administrator
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson, Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Re: Quincy Medical Group Hospital, Project #20-044

Dear Ms. Avery:

I am writing in opposition of Quincy Medical Group ("QMG") Hospital. As the former CEO of the Blessing Health System, and after leading Blessing for 33 years, I know what it takes to operate, effectively, a community-based hospital. The proposed second hospital will create a compromising threat to our community's existing healthcare safety net.

This body has a long-standing practice of decertifying Blessing's licensed beds as the industry has shifted from inpatient to outpatient care. Why should we now turn about-face and reallocate those unnecessary beds to QMG? The projections QMG used for Blessing's utilization in a region with stagnant to negative population growth is simply unrealistic.

QMG conveniently predicted outpatient healthcare as the future in their most recent CON for their surgery center, and now 18 months later changes the narrative to hospital inpatient growth for a region that is predicted to see our census counts drop dramatically when it is released soon. QMG's CEO even admitted in public that they were planning this new hospital right after their surgery center CON was approved leaving us conflicted by her statements.

The pandemic has taught us that the need for advanced inpatient care is critical. In addition, we can't ignore the needs of our aging population with complex healthcare challenges. QMG's assumptions put our local healthcare system in real danger, and for what, a "low acuity hospital" that will be completed almost 5 years from now? By the time their hospital opens in almost 5 years, the advances in treatments will have moved even further from inpatient care. This application is simply illogical and self-serving.

This second hospital is being proposed as a taxable not-for-profit entity. This governance model is a strategic choice to avoid having a community-based majority on the board. In fact, the initial board, disappointingly, has ZERO community members and all members associated with QMG. If QMG is so focused on serving the community with a new healthcare delivery system, why is it that there is no community involvement in governance? No community governance will allow QMG to operate without outside accountability and regrettably with no true sense of duty to treat charity and Medicaid patients. The burden of care would continue to fall on the only entity truly committed to the care of every person, regardless of their ability to pay, and that is Blessing.

The proposed second hospital is not needed and would only add stress to our region's healthcare system. I encourage you to oppose Quincy Medical Group Hospital, project #20-044.

Thank you.



B. Bradford Billings