



Joseph V. Chiarelli

County Board Chairman

County of Winnebago

January 26, 2022

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

Re: #E-056-21/Discontinuation of Services at Javon Bea Hospital-Rockton Avenue/Mercyhealth

Dear Ms. Avery,

This letter of opposition is in regard to the consolidation of services at Javon Bea Hospital – Rockton Avenue/Mercyhealth in Rockford, Illinois. I, Winnebago County Board Chairman Joseph V. Chiarelli, am writing to declare that I strongly oppose the discontinuation of surgical services at the campus.

While the current inventory of hospital beds in which Javon Bea Hospital - Rockton is located indicates a surplus of 159 beds, the location of these beds in comparison to the region needs to be taken into consideration. Javon Bea Hospital – Rockton Avenue is the only major hospital system located on the west side of Rockford, serving a predominately minority population most in need of access to quality medical care. Mercyhealth's request to discontinue the 70-bed medical surgical category of service at the Rockton Avenue campus would result in a gap in access to healthcare for a demographic of the city already facing dire health inequities.

Further, this change in service not only impacts the residents of the surrounding area but employees in the region. Since the opening of Javon Bea Hospital – Mercyhealth Riverside Boulevard in 2019 on the city's east side, a pattern of closures has led to the loss of a Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, mental health services, emergency services and now threatens the loss of surgical services and inpatient care. As Winnebago County Board Chairman, I respectfully ask for your consideration in denying this request.

Sincerely,

Joseph V. Chiarelli

Winnebago County Board Chairman