

March 17, 2022

Ms. Debra Savage, Chairwoman
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Ms. Savage,

I am writing this correspondence in support of the Illinois Masonic Medical Center Bed Tower and Center for Advanced Care Expansion Project. I have been given the opportunity to join this hospital for the last two years, after my recent graduation from a fellowship in cardiovascular disease. As a physician trained in Advanced Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiology, I propose that the advances in the field of cardiology has outpaced the growth of most facilities and will continue to do so.

Coronary artery disease, congestive heart failure and arrhythmia are the major causes of death in our aging population outpacing infections, cancers and respiratory illness. The pandemic tested our resources and resolve but the truth is that we need to expand our resources, not for the next pandemic but for the influx of chronic cardiac disease that is to come in the near future.

That said, the current facilities at Illinois Masonic Hospital are over fifty years old. Populations with cardiovascular disease routinely require new procedural interventions to allow for improvement in their care as medicine alone is no longer considered the standard of care. Our current operating rooms can no longer satisfy the growing needs of this aging population. With the proposed expansion and flexibility of use with the new procedural space, we will be able to offer innovative procedures and an ability to grow with future advancements.

Despite many advances to our medical field, the old adage of prevention holds true. It will always be better to prevent the impending heart failure exacerbation in clinic than to treat it in the hospital. With a focus on shifting classically inpatient care to a growing outpatient model, there will also be a need for increased clinic space for outpatient interventions. Without an expansion in our current ability to identify and treat cardiovascular disease, I suspect that these chronic illnesses will result in greater mortality and morbidity for the residents of our neighborhood. The proposed changes with the expansion of our outpatient facilities will dramatically increase our ability to identify, test and intervene upon cardiac illnesses before they result in debilitating changes to our patients' lives and hospital admissions.

For those illnesses that we cannot prevent, an inpatient admission will be required. Inpatient admissions are often strenuous. For example, heart failure routinely results in a prolonged hospitalizations in which patients may become deconditioned and more so disillusioned. The new bed tower will allow for all private patient rooms, improving not just the privacy for patients and their families but their overall experience as they stay with us to recover.

Illinois Masonic Hospital has a rich history in Chicago. It is now over 121 years old. It has served the populations of Chicago admirably for many years and remains an essential, indispensable resource for our patients who have remained with us through these most difficult of times. I urge you, along with the members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board, to approve the certificate of need for the Illinois Masonic Medical Center

Bed Tower and Center for Advanced Care Expansion Project. In doing so, we will be better prepared for this aging population and better positioned to carry forward our healthcare mission in this century as Masonic did in the previous.

Sincerely,
Nishit J. Shah

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nishit J. Shah', written in a cursive style.

Medical Director of the Advanced Heart Failure Clinic
Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center