

ROBIN L. KELLY
2ND DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

2329 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225-0773
FAX: (202) 225-5681

www.RobinKelly.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

600 HOLIDAY PLAZA DR.
SUITE 505
MATTESON, IL 60443
PHONE: (708) 679-0078

1642 E. 56TH STREET
SUITE 110
CHICAGO, IL 60637
PHONE: (773) 321-2001

September 12, 2023

Chairwoman Debra Savage and Members
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

Dear Chairwoman Savage and Members of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board:

I appreciate the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board's consideration of my November 23, 2022, letter in opposition of Springfield Clinic's application for a Certificate of Need to establish cardiac catheterization services at its Ambulatory Surgery Center in Springfield. I am writing you again to reiterate my opposition to Springfield Clinic's Certificate of Need ("CON") application to establish cardiac catheterizations at the Springfield Clinic Ambulatory Surgery Center. It is my belief that, if approved, this project will lead to substandard care and increased health disparities for our community.

While a cardiac catheterization is a common procedure used to diagnose or treat heart problems, it does not come without risk. Heart attacks, strokes, bleeding, and blood clots are just some of the complications that could arise with the procedure. These risks are why cardiac catheterizations should be performed in a supervised hospital setting where resources are available to minimize the opportunity for them to become major complications, unlike an ambulatory surgery setting.

In addition to this increased chance for patient harm, the approval of this project could also worsen health disparities among people of color and marginalized groups. As you are probably aware, Medicaid is the public health insurance program funding health care for low-income families. It is estimated that 26% of all Illinois residents are covered by Medicaid, and almost 86% of those covered are people of color.

Yet, Springfield Clinic's CON application clearly states patients covered by Medicaid comprise only 5% of their total cardiology visits. Unlike other Illinois hospitals, which provide billions of dollars in true charity care annually and take care of all patients regardless of their ability to pay, Springfield Clinic provides no charity care. In fact, the Safety Net Impact Statement in the application highlights that payment plans would be necessary for those not covered under a third-party insurance plan. Simply put, the increased patient access referenced in several letters of support for this project will not be gained by the Medicaid or uninsured population. Instead, the for-profit Springfield Clinic will likely redirect commercially insured patients from hospitals well-equipped and most capable to safely provide this service – the same hospitals demonstrating stalwart support and service to their communities before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a Member of Congress representing the Second Congressional District, member of the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, and Chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus Health

Braintrust, I am committed to improving the health and wellness of vulnerable communities across the country and ensuring that all Illinoisans have access to quality, affordable healthcare. I trust and believe that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board prioritizes equity, fairness, and quality of care for patients when making decisions that impact the health and well-being of Illinois residents. Accordingly, I encourage you to oppose Springfield Clinic's request for cardiac catheterization services, project #22-027 after a full and fair consideration consistent with applicable law, rules, and regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin L. Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "R".

Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress

cc: John Kniery