



3/27/2023

Ms. Debra Savage, Chair
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL. 62761

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

To address the significant behavioral health needs of the people of Peoria and the surrounding areas, we support the plans by US Health Vest and OSF Healthcare System to build a 100- bed behavioral health hospital in Peoria, Illinois through a joint venture.

Nationwide, one in five adults suffers from a diagnosable mental illness in any given year. There are at least 123 Americans who die by suicide every day because of mental illness.

Mental illness, whether acute or chronic, is a serious concern across communities. As statistics show, these concerns are even more pressing in poor neighborhoods, where black and brown people live because access to mental health services are lacking.

The design and construction of a new inpatient mental health hospital with a full continuum of services in Peoria will help address these currently unmet needs. People who require varying levels of behavioral health care will find compassion, support, and access to the clinical expertise they need, close to home.

The Naacp Peoria Branch stands with US Health Vest and OSF in supporting patients who are seeking local access to inpatient behavioral health care. We appreciate your consideration and request your support of this project and approval by the Illinois Health Facilities Services Review Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Marvin Hightower". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Pastor Marvin Hightower
President, NAACP Peoria Branch