

March 8, 2023

Chairwoman Debra Savage
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761

Re: US HealthVest and OSF Healthcare System Adult Behavioral Health Hospital, Project: 23-008
Letter of Support

Dear Chairwoman Savage and Members:

As CEO of the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council (GPEDC) and a Peoria resident for nearly 20 years, I am writing in strong support of Project No. 23-008. Our community has many strengths, but like so many other American cities is dealing with a mental health crisis and a shortfall in treatment capacity.

In 2021 GPEDC completed and approved the *Big Table Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*, a five year strategic plan that will help guide the region to greater economic resiliency and success. That framework includes strategies to “foster and facilitate healthy lifestyle choices for improved health outcomes and individual prosperity.” That is why our organization partners with and I am proud to serve on the board of the Partnership for a Healthy Community, a public health action group composed of local health departments, our two hospital systems and other stakeholders. This group recently identified mental health as a key priority to be addressed over the next few years.

I am acutely aware that investment in our community’s public health – and more specifically, its mental health – could not be more important to our economy. Properly diagnosed and treated mental health issues lead to personal stability and allows individuals to be productive members of the workforce. This proposed 100-bed adult hospital will increase access to behavioral health services throughout downstate Illinois. As the largest facility south of Chicago, it will provide greatly needed inpatient behavioral health resources for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families, regardless of ability to pay. It will help fill the current and growing unmet need in Peoria and the surrounding area for inpatient psychiatric care, which often results in patients being deferred or even denied necessary mental health treatment. Furthermore, this facility will help ensure patients are set up for long-term success through aftercare services, and patients and families will benefit from having the services they need available locally – saving both time and money.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of the certificate of need application for US HealthVest and OSF Healthcare. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,



Christopher Setti
Chief Executive Officer