

ST. BERNARD HOSPITAL AND HEALTH CARE CENTER

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January 17, 2023

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

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Re: Support for UCMC Cancer Hospital

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

I write in support of the University of Chicago Medicine's proposed new cancer center. We supported the original Master Design CON application and continue our support for the construction CON.

St. Bernard Hospital is a safety-net facility serving a population whose health status is challenged by decades of inequities compared to other communities and population groups. Unfortunately, many patients on the South Side do not have the same access to healthcare that residents in other parts of the city enjoy. Cancer is the second leading cause of death in our communities and residents on the South Side of Chicago are twice as likely to die from cancer compared to almost anywhere else in the United States. These types of inequities in health outcomes are largely a product of social determinants of health, including access to cancer prevention and care.

Finding facilities that provide appropriate cancer care for our patients and coordination of that care, given the obstacles many of our patient face is difficult. The new UCMC Cancer Hospital will bring cancer care and services for our patients closer to their homes and will provide a resource often currently unavailable for them. We are very hopeful the new cancer center will address these health inequities and provide our patients new opportunities to get the care they need.

As a partner in the 13-member South Side Healthy Community Organization (SSHCO), we are committed to improving the health of South Side residents and believe this proposed cancer center will help strengthen the entire healthcare ecosystem within this community. Our SSHCO model is focused on strengthening primary and specialty care access, preventive and chronic care management, care coordination, provider collaboration, and community engagement – all of which will be enhanced by the proposed cancer center. We understand that UChicago Medicine's facility will deliver multidisciplinary, technologically advanced care with access to the latest therapies and treatment innovations, anchored by basic and translational research that the institution is known for.

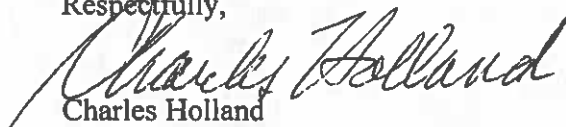


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Page 2

We are well aware that UChicago Medicine operates at capacity almost every day and is frequently forced to call surge conditions. Capacity constraints and surge conditions limit our ability to transfer patients whose care needs can be met only at an academic health system like UChicago Medicine. A new cancer facility will help provide South Side residents with the resources that other neighborhoods in the city often take for granted. South Side patients deserve both a system of community hospitals and academic medicine-level complex care, just as patients in other parts of the city receive.

If approved, this expansion will go a long way toward supporting the goals of the SSHCO and establishing a stronger healthcare system on the South Side. We hope you help the city take this important step toward health equity by supporting this proposed cancer center

Respectfully,



Charles Holland
President and CEO