

Dear Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board,

I am writing to express my full support of the University of Chicago Medicine's proposal to build a dedicated cancer care and clinical research facility in our community.

July 2nd, 2021, I got my biopsy results back that I indeed had breast cancer. It was two weeks after my 31st birthday. To be honest I wasn't really in shock because I was preparing for a positive result as I had been sick for the entire month of June 2021.

As a cancer survivor/patient, I understand firsthand the challenges, fears and uncertainties that come with the journey of fighting cancer.

Patients on the South Side do not have the same access to cancer prevention, diagnostics and care that residents in other parts of the city enjoy. In fact, statistics show that over half of South Side patients elect to leave the area to get the care they need. With cancer being the second leading cause of death in our communities and the incidence of cancer expected to rise across our region, we need a dedicated cancer care and research facility.

Everyone should be able to get proper care with their treatment, and I believe this new cancer center can help with this. Especially this will help cancer patients and families navigate their appointments better.

One of the great aspects of the proposed center is that it will build upon UChicago Medicine's world-class cancer program, which has a strong history of cancer innovation and superior clinical expertise.

The new facility will provide patients technologically advanced care — including the latest diagnostic and treatment innovations — while also facilitating and enhancing collaboration between clinicians and researchers to develop future innovations in cancer treatment and care. It will be a place where people can learn about cancer prevention and the need for early detection. The facility will be patient- and family-focused, designed to ensure all cancer services across the continuum of care are located on its medical campus, making the challenging obstacles facing patients and families more manageable.

A new facility will provide South Side residents with additional resources that other neighborhoods in the city often take for granted. It will bring hope to people across the city, state and region who are seeking the very best care, the latest clinical trials, and innovative therapies.

I firmly believe that such a dedicated cancer care and research center is of utmost importance for the well-being and future of individuals battling this devastating disease. We hope you help the City of Chicago take the important step in providing the care that patients like me need.

Sincerely,

Courtney A. Jones