

August 28, 2023

Mike Constantino
c/o Health Facilities and Service Review Board
525 W. Jefferson Street
Springfield, IL 62761

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Ted Strack. I am a life-long resident of Sycamore, Illinois located in DeKalb County. DeKalb County has entered into a contract to sell county owned nursing home (the DeKalb County Home) to Illuminate, HC. The sale of the DeKalb County Home to this entity is of concern to me and should be of concern to all county residents.

In 1853 DeKalb County formally established a care institution referred to as the "Poor Farm". It is my understanding that the Poor Farm was established to help county residents who were not able to help themselves. The vast majority of these individuals were the elderly that did not have family support and/or the financial means to meet their most basic needs. The county stepped in and provided these individuals with the care they needed which is exactly the right thing to do.

In 1945 the name of Poor Farm was officially changed to the DeKalb County Home. Over the years I am sure the Poor Farm/DeKalb County Home had its ups and downs from a quality of care and financial perspective. My personal connection to the DeKalb County Home was quite positive. My grandmother Walter spent her last years there, felt quite comfortable, and was well cared for by the staff. I have heard similar stories from numerous other county residents.

I am concerned that the sale of the DeKalb County Home to Illuminate, HC will have a significant negative effect on the quality of care provided to those DeKalb County residents who can no longer care for themselves. As Illuminate, HC is a for profit venture, their number one motivator is money not care. This is born out by the quality of care ratings they have received at the other nursing home facilities they own and/or manage.

My second area of concern is financial in nature. It is my estimate that DeKalb County has invested over \$100,000,000 into the DeKalb County Home facility. To recreate this facility today would cost well over this amount. They are proposing to sell this asset for less than 10% of the county's gross investment into the property. As a tax payer this does not sit well with me.

It is my understanding that at the current time the facility is under utilized and hemorrhaging cash. Selling the DeKalb County Home is certainly the quickest way to make this problem disappear. I am concerned that all DeKalb County will be doing is trading one problem (an underperforming nursing care facility) with another problem a horribly run nursing care facility.

So what alternative is there? In my opinion the county needs to hire the best facility manager they can find (pay this party a lot of money) and then demand performance out of that person and the facility. DeKalb County operated The DeKalb County Home successfully for years, they can do so again. It will take time, determination, and yes more money. I am convinced that a well run county owned nursing home will ultimately resolve the money issue. It is in the best long term interest of DeKalb county residents for DeKalb county to continue to own and operate the DeKalb County Home.

Sincerely,



Ted M. Strack 815-762-2049
1370 Windfield Drive
Sycamore, IL 60178