

Dear Health Facilities and Services Review Board,

I am writing in support of the sale of the Dekalb County Rehabilitation and Nursing Center. I have seen the articles in the paper over the last couple of years. To this point, I have felt it unnecessary to voice my opinion until now. I am sure you will hear about the petition that was circulated to gain signatures at the Sandwich fair in favor of keeping the home. The man asking for signatures was extremely rude to my wife and I when I refused to sign it. He began berating us for not caring about the elderly and demanding we sign it. He made us so uncomfortable that we had to leave the fair because we would not sign the petition under duress, so I feel compelled to set the record straight and tell you what the silent majority of the County, is thinking.

From my research and your comments from the last meeting, it is very clear the county board is incompetent and irresponsible when it comes to running a nursing home. You were right, they have done a terrible job in overseeing this facility. They have lost millions of dollars of taxpayer money to keep this thing afloat. Why should tax dollars be going towards the 110 patients in this facility instead of serving the 100,000 residents of the county?

When you look at who is writing letters of opposition to the sale, Google their addresses. Many of those individuals do not live in Dekalb County. You even have people from other states writing in. Why are you allowing them to have a say in this process when they are not the ones footing the tax bill. That is ridiculous!

Times are hard on us all, already. Inflation is running rampant, housing prices are rising quickly, food costs are insane, car prices are astronomical and now student loans are needing to be repaid again. People can barely afford to live, let alone give more money to an irresponsible government body to spend frivolously. All of these letters of opposition and your board talk about how low the star rating is of the buyers, as well as their history of violations. I just checked today and the DCRNC has a two-star rating with an abuse tag! How has no one brought this up? If the county is supposedly running this well, how is this their star rating? With the millions of dollars of taxpayer money being thrown at this mess, how is the best they can do? Shouldn't they be a five-star facility if they receive so much extra support? Paying my tax bill hurts enough but knowing my hard-earned money is being used to prop up such a mismanaged facility is unconscionable.

I am not against supporting our elderly, but the private industry can do the same job if not better. This County home started as a poor farm to help the indigent because there was nowhere else to go. Now there are other places to go, there are a number of nursing homes in Dekalb County that provide the same service and have better ratings. My tax dollars don't prop up their losses so why should they do that for the County home?

SABA has terrible ratings, but the IDPH has still given them licenses to run ten other facilities. You folks at the HFSRB are a subsidiary of IDPH. You questioned their fitness to run skilled nursing facilities, what happens if you deny this certificate of need on that basis? Do their other licenses get revoked even though IDPH has already said they are qualified? What is your liability if you deny this, will you at the State be paying the bills for us, the taxpayers? Their facility ratings are horrible, but they certainly can't do a worse job running the facility than the County Board has.

To my understanding, the County Board decided to sell the facility to ensure it remained a skilled nursing facility. If you deny this sale, it may not give this facility a chance to stay open and provide these services in the County without the government handing over a blank check.

The HFSRB is hearing from the loud minority of the County, as well as many residents of other counties, who want to keep this as a taxpayer burden. The residents of the County, such as myself, who believe that the County Board is making the fiscally responsible decision to admit they are incompetent and sell this facility to someone who can do it better, are the silent majority. You folks are appointed to make decisions that are in the best interests of the health, safety and general welfare of the People of IL. There are over 100,000 people in Dekalb County, think about them instead of just the 110 in the nursing home. Do the right thing and approve this sale.

Sincerely,

A Concerned Taxpayer