



April 17, 2024

Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St., Second Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

To the Review Board,

Chicago Beyond is a proud partner of the Chicago South Side Birth Center (CSSBC) and would like to express support as it seeks a Certificate of Need. Launched in 2016, Chicago Beyond is a committed impact investor that works to ensure all young people have the opportunity to live a free and full life in Chicago's communities. Chicago Beyond has partnered closely with Jeanine Valrie Logan, founder of CSSBC, over the last year to successfully launch the Black midwife-led birth center. As a birth equity champion, Jeanine works to address inequities in Black maternal health. In August of 2021, she was influential in pushing through Illinois House Bill 738, which aims to expand access to birth centers across the City of Chicago.

CSSBC has the potential for tremendous impact for birthing people, families, and communities served. There is a lack of supportive birthing options available to pregnant Black women and people on the South Side and it has created what the [Chicago Tribune has called a birthing desert](#), forcing them to travel far beyond where they live to seek adequate prenatal care, and to deliver. CSSBC would bring culturally concordant and community-focused birthing care to Chicago's South Side. Its establishment increases the number of birth options available to birthing people while simultaneously decreasing the strain felt by existing clinics and Labor & Delivery Units on the South Side. Based on the most recent maternal and child health outcomes in Chicago, non-Hispanic Black women have both the highest rates of severe maternal morbidity and pregnancy-associated mortality. As a freestanding maternal health center CSSBC will provide full-spectrum, evidenced-based maternity, gynecological, family planning and postpartum care utilizing a midwifery care model. It will also create a liberatory space that affirms the experience, autonomy, identity, healing, self-determination, and liberation of Black birthing people, their families, and communities. CSSBC believes this type of care will address the disparities and inequities in maternal and infant outcomes in Chicago. And we believe that this type of care will set the standard for what holistic and community-based maternal health can look like across the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, and the nation.

We express our wholehearted support of CSSBC as an answer to the lack of care options currently available on the Southside as well as a solution to the disparate maternal and child health rates among Black birthing people and children on the South Side. If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Dozier".

Liz Dozier
Founder & CEO, Chicago Beyond