



**Southern Illinois University Edwardsville**  
**School of Nursing**

December 20, 2024

Hon. Debra Savage, Chairperson  
IL Health Facilities & Services Review Board  
525 W. Jefferson St., Second Floor  
Springfield, IL 62762  
Dear Ms. Savage,

**RECEIVED**

**MAR 05 2025**

**HEALTH FACILITIES &  
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD  
25-011**

This letter is written in support of the Certificate of Need (CON) application, submitted by HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital in O'Fallon (SEO), to invest \$66 million in capital improvements that will allow the hospital to meet existing patient demand and make the facility more space efficient. As I mentioned in an earlier support letter for SEO's application to construct a new ambulatory surgical treatment center (ASTC) and medical office building (MOB) on the O'Fallon hospital campus, these types of investments dramatically improve patient retention and reduce RN turnover. SEO is to be commended for addressing its current capacity needs.

The clinical and infrastructure plans that are implemented through this project demonstrate SEO's commitment to the needs of both the patients served by, and the nurses who staff, the hospital. SEO's existing 122-bed medical/surgical unit has been utilized at or over 90% every year since 2019, compared to the state's target utilization of 85%. The last two years have averaged over 100% utilization. This extremely high utilization creates back-up in the emergency department as patients frequently must wait for in-patient beds to become available. This also renders the hospital unable to meet periodic surges in local patient care needs, as typically occurs during flu season. Adding 32 medical/surgical beds will allow SEO to meet the state's target utilization standard based on historical patient volume and accounting for a very modest annual growth rate of in-patient population.

I am also excited by SEO's plan to add 8 new emergency department treatment rooms, an additional CT scanner, and space reconfigurations that will improve patient access – and the ability of nurses to provide more efficient care delivery.

Please consider this letter of support as you review the CON application by SEO for this well-justified healthcare investment.

Sincerely,

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